REHOBOAM TO NEHEMIAH

BETHLEHEM

The Sacred Pageant of the Ages

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THE KINGDOM DIVIDED

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER XXV

It was under the leadership of Solomon that the temple was built, which was Israel's greatest achievement. Solomon was a keen-minded ruler and a sagacious judge, but was not the equal of his father as a statesman nor soldier. The idea of a great central temple was David's, who purchased its site and whose influence with Hiram, king of Tyre, accounted for the assistance received from that king. Solomon did not hold the territory left by his father, but he did, through an alliance by marriage to Pharaoh's daughter, receive valuable help from Egypt, and many parts of his country were fortified. Solomon organized his army, built chariots, engaged in commerce, and lived in luxury. But in so doing, he brought upon himself the displeasure of his people, especially those outside of the tribe of Judah, which, under the reign of his son, finally resulted in the division of the kingdom and eventually the captivity of the people. Solomon ruled Israel forty years, and was buried by the side of his father in Jerusalem.

THE BROKEN ALTAR

Elliger

ARROGANCE OF REHOBOAM

Holbein

Chapter XXV

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED

1 Kings 11-13

MAP

MAP—Solomon left his country practically intact, as it had been handed to him by David, except for the disturbance at Damascus by Rezon (1 Kings 11: 23), and Hadad's uprising in Edom (1 Kings 11: 21-22). And now that Solomon is dead, the kingdom is passed on to his son Rehoboam without opposition.

ARROGANCE OF REHOBOAM—Solomon had forced all Israel to labor in his great building enterprises, and they had become very weary of it, especially the northern tribes, where there was a continual disposition to secede from the united kingdom. For diplomatic reasons, Rehoboam went to Shechem, capital of Ephraim, for the coronation cere-

EBAL AND GERIZIM

monies. But in making a show of his authority, he blundered greatly in following unwise counsel. 1 Kings 12.

EBAL AND GERIZIM—Jeroboam, who had fled to Egypt because of his break with Solomon (1 Kings 11: 26-40), now hearing of the death of his adversary, returned with the hope, if possible, of becoming king of the ten northern tribes. He did not, however, press his claim until Israel had fully decided to rebel against Rehoboam. 1 Kings 12: 16-24.

MAP

MAP—So Jeroboam was proclaimed king at Shechem by the northern tribes (hereafter called Israel), and the kingdom of united Israel was divided forever. The tribes of Benjamin and Dan, being on the border of the two kingdoms, part of them clung (probably forced) to Judah and part to Israel.

PENUEL—Jeroboam not only rebuilt Shechem, which became the first capital of the northern kingdom, but

also rebuilt and fortified Penuel, just east of Jordan. 1 Kings 12: 25.

PENUEL

DAN—The ten tribes had helped to build the temple at Jerusalem and naturally looked upon it as the center of their religious system. This feeling had to be broken down by their new king, otherwise his position would be in constant danger. So Jeroboam set up a golden calf at Dan and one at Bethel to prevent his people going to the temple at Jerusalem. 1 Kings 12: 26-30.

DAN

BETHEL—Jeroboam no doubt claimed that there was nothing especially sacred about Jerusalem, but that Bethel was sanctified by Abraham and Lot, and that Jacob's name was

BETHEL

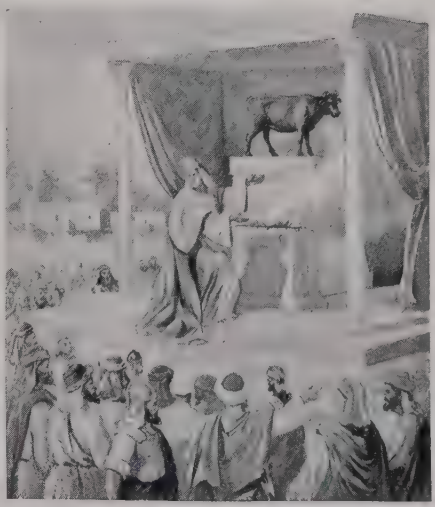
changed to Israel here, and that he had actually called it the "House of God" (Gen. 28: 10-22). For these reasons it was really a sacred spot.

MAP—He could also say of Dan, in the extreme north, that it was established as a place of worship, by one, no less than the grandson of Moses (Judges 18). This arrangement, too, would give them two places of worship and would make it more convenient. Thus Jeroboam may have argued, but his real object was to keep his people away from Jerusalem (1 Kings 12: 22-28).

MAP

JEROBOAM'S IDOL—As Jeroboam was officiating at the altar at Bethel in person, a prophet of God ap-

proached him with a solemn warning. Jeroboam attacked the prophet and his hand became withered, but the prophet of God interceded for the king and God restored the withered hand. Jeroboam then invited the prophet to his home, but having been divinely instructed, he



JEROBOAM'S IDOL

DEATH OF THE PROPHET

declined the king's hospitality. 1Kings 13: 1-10.

Death of the Prophet—But the mysterious prophet did, however, accept an invitation to dine with another prophet of Bethel (against God's direction—verse 8), and as he started to return to Judah he was destroyed by a lion, and was identified by the

BETHLEHEM

prophet as being the man who had dined with him. 1 Kings 13: 11-32.

THE PROPHECY OF AHIJAH—Jeroboam now resides at Tirzah, northeast of Shechem. And when his son, Abijah, took sick, he did not seem to be willing to trust his own priests at Dan or Bethel, but sent his wife to the prophet Ahijah at Shiloh, to inquire whether the son's sickness would be fatal. Jeroboam was warned and severely rebuked, and given the sad and depressing news that his son would die, which shortly came to pass, and there was great lamentation. 1 Kings 14: 1-18.

EGYPT

BETHLEHEM—What is chiefly recorded of the activities of Rehoboam is that he "dwelt in Jeru-

Manton

THE PROPHECY OF AHIJAH

Poussin

HOLY HILLS

salem and built cities for defense," and some fifteen cities of Judah and Benjamin are named as having been fortified by him, the most important being Bethlehem. 2 Chron. 11: 5-12.

Holy Hills—Rehoboam married among strange peoples, and like Solomon, was led into idolatry together with his people. "For they also built them high places and images and groves on every high hill and under every green tree." 1 Kings 14: 21-24.

MOUNT ZION

Egypt — Shishak became king of Egypt, when Rehoboam had been ruling five years. Shishak invaded Judah and pillaged the temple, carrying away the treasures of the house and the golden shields with which Solomon had equipped the temple guards. 1 Kings 14: 25-28.

Mount Zion—Rehoboam was forty-one years of age when he ascended the throne and reigned seventeen years. He died in Jerusalem and was buried near his father and grandfather, Solomon and David, on Mount Zion. 1 Kings 14: 31.

The Bethel Country—Rehoboam was succeeded by his son, Abijah (Abijam—1 Kings 14: 31), who continued his father's campaign against Jeroboam. He

THE BETHEL COUNTRY

took Bethel from his opponent and rebuked him for his forsaking God and substituting idols, though Abijah was guilty of the same thing; except that he also supported the temple. 2 Chron. 13.

ZION — Abijah (Abijam) reigned only three years. "So Abijah (Abijam) slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David; and Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years." 2 Chron. 14: 1.

KIDRON VALLEY—Asa became king of Judah, one year before the death of Jeroboam of Israel. "And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of Jehovah his God: for he took away the strange altars, and the

ZION

Dore

BATTLE OF GIBBETHON

high places, and broke down the pillars, and hewed down the Asherim" (2 Chron. 14: 2-4). The idols he burnt in the Kidron valley, just outside the walls of Jerusalem. 1 Kings 15: 13.

KIDRON VALLEY

BATTLE OF GIBBETHON—Jeroboam lived to see both Rehoboam and Abijah of Judah pass away, and one year of the reign of Asa, king of Judah. Then Nadab took the throne of Israel but he accomplished nothing of note during his short reign of two years. He attacked the Philistines at Gibbethon and met his death at the hands of a conspirator—Baasha, a man of humble rank, who succeeded Nadab of the northern Kingdom.

MOSQUE IN DAMASCUS

Mosque in Damascus—Baasha became active against Judah at once. He fortified Ramah (the old home of Samuel), which is almost in sight of Jerusalem. He was the first of a new dynasty and murdered every member of the family of Jeroboam (1 Kings 15: 16-17). Ben-hadad, king of Syria, who lived in Damascus, was in league with Israel, but Asa took all the gold and silver in the house of the Lord, and with it he bribed the Syrian king, who joined Judah. 1 Kings 15: 18-20.

MAP

Map—Ben-hadad immediately invaded northern Israel as far south as Chinneroth (Sea of Galilee). This drew Baasha from Ramah and Asa was not slow to take advantage of the situation. He took the stone and timbers away from Ramah and strengthened his own border cities of Geba and Mizpeh. 1 Kings 15: 22.

Tirzah—Baasha ruled Israel twenty-four years. He died a natural death and was buried at Tirzah. His son Elah succeeded him and was murdered by his captain, Zimri, during a drunken carousal. Zimri then announced himself king, but at the end of seven days the

army crowned Omri. When Zimri heard the news he set Tirzah on fire and perished in the flames. 1 Kings 16: 8-20.

TIRZAH

HILL OF SAMARIA—Asa had been king of Judah thirty-one years when Omri ascended the throne of Israel. For six years Omri's capital was Tirzah, when he bought this hill of Samaria, which now became his capital, and remained the royal city until the captivity of Israel by Assyria. 1 Kings 16: 23-24.

HILL OF SAMARIA

SAMARIA—Samaria, having been built upon an isolated hill, offered as strong a defense as Jerusalem, and it will be seen that it withstood many sieges as severe as any

SAMARIA

that ever her sister capital was subjected to.

OMRI'S TEMPLE—Recent excavations reveal something of the grandeur of Samaria. These are the ruins of a great building which the natives call the Temple of Omri. It was located on the very top of the hill and commanded a view of the country on every side for miles around the city.

SAMARITAN IDOLS—Omri, though no relation to Jeroboam, carried out his religious ideas and worshiped idols. "He did worse than all that were before him" (1 Kings 16: 25). These images have been unearthed here in Samaria, but to what age they belong we are not sure, since

OMRI'S TEMPLE

this city was under the influence of idol worshipers from Omri to the Roman rule, in the time of Christ.

SAMARITAN IDOLS

SIDON—One Ethbaal was king of Sidon and a priest of Baal at this time, and his daughter was Jezebel. Omri contracted a marriage alliance between his son Ahab and Jezebel, which for defensive purposes, was worth while. But the effect from a religious standpoint became hurtful indeed, and finally resulted in a gruesome ending of the Omri dynasty.

SIDON

SAMARIA—Omri after having ruled in his new capital six years (making twelve in all), died and was buried in Samaria. Asa has been king of Judah thirty-

SAMARIA

eight years now, and has seen the passing away of Nadab (2 years), Baasha (22 years), Elah (2 years), Zimri (7 days), Omri (12 years), and still lives to see four years of the reign of Ahab.

EXCAVATIONS AT SAMARIA—The calf worship, it seems, was not intended to be purely idolatrous. It was rather a medium of approach to Jehovah. But with Ahab's advent, Jezebel introduced Baal worship in all its fullness, in direct opposition to the religion of Israel. If Ahab did not accept his wife's religion he was very friendly toward it, and the cause of Baal was pushed with diligence throughout the domains of Israel by the queen. 1 Kings 16: 29-33.

EXCAVATIONS AT SAMARIA

Questions

Who succeeded Solomon? How did Israel feel toward Solomon? Did Rehoboam promise to lighten their burden? How did this affect Israel? Why did Jeroboam go to Egypt? What was the object of his return? Where was he crowned king of the ten tribes? What was his first capital? What system of worship did he establish? At what two places were these idols located? What was the object of these places of worship? What happened when Jeroboam was officiating? What did a prophet of God do for him? Of what did Rehoboam's kingdom consist? Who was king of Egypt at this time? Describe the pillage of the temple? How long did Rehoboam reign in Jerusalem? Who was his successor? Who succeeded Abijah? How long did Jeroboam reign in Israel during the reign of Asa? Explain the reason for the division of the kingdom? Who succeeded Jeroboam? Who succeeded Nadab in Israel? What was Baasha's attitude toward Judah? Who was king of Syria? With what did Asa bribe Ben-hadad? Describe the conquest of Ben-hadad in Israel? Who was Omri? What was his first capital? Where did he build a new capital? Was he an idol worshiper? How many years had Asa been ruling when Omri came to the throne of Israel?

ELIJAH AND ELISHA

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER XXVI

The United Kingdom lived during the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon. The northern tribes who for various reasons had never been fond of Judah, now with the advent of Rehoboam to the throne, saw an excuse to secede; and when Jeroboam returned from Egypt, where he had sought refuge from Solomon, he championed the cause of Israel and became their first king. Wars between these families of Israel were frequent, and a real union between them was never effected. Jeroboam reigned in the north twenty-two years, and during this time Rehoboam ruled in Jerusalem seventeen years, Abijah three years, and Asa one year. Asa was king at Jerusalem forty-one years. His contemporaries in Israel were Jeroboam, closing year; Nadab, two years; Baasha, twenty-two years; Elah, two years; Zimri, seven days; Omri, twelve years; and four years of Ahab's rule. To get a clear understanding of the future events, which from a historic standpoint are among the most interesting in the Bible, the names of the kings should be committed to memory and the events placed in the time of the reign of the ruler when they occurred. A table for this purpose will be found on pages 273 and 274, and frequent consultation will be of great value. Chapter twenty-four closes the story of the marriage of Ahab to Jezebel of Sidon. She is an ardent worshiper of Baal, and does her utmost to introduce her religion into Israel.

Carey

ELIJAH THE TISHBITE

ELIJAH'S DENUNCIATION

Chapter XXVI

ELIJAH AND ELISHA

1 Kings 17—2 Kings 4

Elijah's Denunciation—Over in Gilead (at Tishib) lived a great prophet, named Elijah. He was a man of the mountains and was fearless and plain spoken. Hearing of the pollution of his people's religion by Jezebel's Baal, he came to Samaria and denounced the system and predicted a great drought in consequence of this departure. 1 Kings 17: 1.

GORGE OF CHERITH

Gorge of Cherith—This incensed Jezebel, who placed a price on the head of Elijah, and he fled for his life. During the earlier part of the drought he hid himself at the Brook Cherith, by the direction of the Lord. 1 Kings 17: 3.

Top of Gorge Cherith—Cherith is a wild deep gorge in the eastern slope of the Judean mountains, not far from the plains of Jordan, east of Jerusalem. It has been also pointed out by tradition as the place of

TOP OF GORGE CHERITH

the temptation of Jesus after his baptism and forty days' fast.

VIEW FROM TOP—From the top of the gorge the whole plain, the Jordan, and the blue hills of Moab are in full view as you look to the east. If, then, Jesus fasted here forty days, he must have looked down over this very scene many times, from whence he might have seen plainly the great crowds in attendance when John the Baptist preached there.

THE BROOK CHERITH—Cherith is a perennial stream and would be the last to fail by drought. So beside these waters Elijah went into hiding from Ahab and Jezebel. He hid

VIEW FROM TOP

MONASTERY OF ST. GEORGE

himself so completely that although they scoured the country in their search, they never found the great prophet.

MONASTERY OF ST. GEORGE—This monastery is dedicated to the memory of this incident, and clings to the precipitous cliff

THE BROOK CHERITH

as though it were held by some magnetic power.

ELIJAH FED BY RAVENS—It is said

ELIJAH FED BY RAVENS

that Elijah was fed here regularly by ravens, who brought him bread and flesh mornings and evenings during the entire period of his long time of waiting here. 1 Kings 17: 6.

ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH—Eventually, the brook dried up and Elijah took refuge at Zarephath, south of Sidon. He arrived just in time to save a starving widow and her son who were preparing a meal, which would have entirely exhausted their supply of food. After they took Elijah into their home, "the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did their cruse of oil fail." 1 Kings 17: 8-16.

ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH

WIDOW'S SON RESTORED—During the prophet's sojourn here the son died, but Elijah restored him alive to his mother. The woman praised God and said, "Now I know thou art a prophet of God." 1 Kings 17: 17-24.

MOUNT CARMEL—Samaria had been in the grip of famine three years, and Elijah was directed to return to Ahab. On his way he met Obadiah seeking water for the king. After some persuasion upon the part of

Brown

WIDOW'S SON RESTORED

Elijah, Obadiah arranged a meeting between Ahab and the prophet, and they met on Mount Carmel. 1 Kings 18: 1-16.

MOUNT CARMEL

SUMMIT OF CARMEL—Ahab called Elijah the troubler of Israel, but Elijah answered, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of Jehovah and thou hast followed the Baalim." 1 Kings 18: 17-18.

SUMMIT OF CARMEL

CARMEL AND THE PLAIN—Elijah challenged Ahab to a test. Let the prophets of Baal build an altar on Carmel, and I—he said—will build one to Jehovah. A bullock will be laid on each altar, and "the God that answereth by fire, let

CARMEL AND THE PLAIN

him be God." "If the Lord be God, follow him, but if Baal then follow him." 1 Kings 18: 17-24.

ELIJAH'S SACRIFICE—Ahab agreed to this test, and his prophets (450 of them) prayed and cut themselves with lancets, while the lone prophet urged them on in their prayers. Baal failed them. But God answered Elijah by consuming his sacrifice, to the great discomfiture of Ahab, for he had agreed to have his prophets put to death if they failed him in this test. 1 Kings 18: 25-38.

PLACE OF THE CONTEST—Elijah's altar is said to have occupied this identical spot on the stony summit of Mount Carmel.

PLACE OF THE CONTEST

ELIJAH'S SACRIFICE

Dore

SLAUGHTER OF THE PRIESTS OF BAAL

THE RIVER KISHON—The river Kishon flows near the base of Mount Carmel. Near here Sisera once lived and by its overflow, it will be remembered, his army was destroyed by Barak and Deborah.

THE RIVER KISHON

SLAUGHTER OF THE PROPHETS OF BAAL—The four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal were brought to the brink of Kishon, and Elijah caused every one of them to be slain according to the agreement and also in accord with the spirit of Deut. 13: 6-11 and 17: 2-7. See 1 Kings 18: 40.

TOP OF MOUNT CARMEL

TOP OF MOUNT CARMEL—Elijah went back into Carmel with his servant, and in answer to his intercession "there was a great rain"

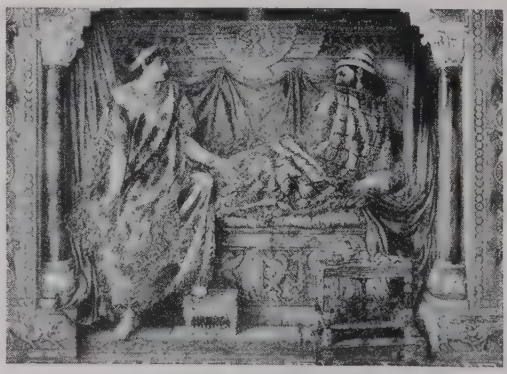
JEZREEL

and the drought, which had been on the country for three years and six months, was broken. 1 Kings 18: 41-44.

JEZREEL—At this time the king had a residence also in Jezreel, on the edge of the plain of Esdræ-lon, in sight of Mount Carmel. During the contest of the prophets, Jezebel remained here waiting for news of the outcome.

JEZEBEL'S THREAT—But the queen was obstinate and unyielding, for when Ahab brought her the news she swore upon her life to put the prophet to the sword, just as he had done to her priests on the banks of Kishon. 1 Kings 19: 1-2.

MONASTERY OF ELIJAH—Elijah lost no time in making his escape. He and his servant fled to Judah and tradition tells of his stopping, en route, by the road side between



JEZEBEL'S THREAT

Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and accordingly, this great building has been erected which is called the monastery of Elijah.

MONASTERY OF ELIJAH

BEERSHEBA COUNTRY—Next he is found at Beersheba, a hundred miles south, where he left his servant. The balance of the way he went alone, and suffered even greater privations than he had previously. 1 Kings 19: 3.

ELIJAH EXHAUSTED—From Beersheba he went a day's journey into the wilderness (south), perhaps near where Hagar and Ishmael, centuries before, nearly perished from thirst. As he sat under a juniper tree exhausted and discouraged, he prayed that he might die. But God had not

BEERSHEBA COUNTRY

MOUNT SINAI

forgotten his prophet and sent an angel to take care of him. 1 Kings 19:4-7.

MOUNT SINAI—He at last found himself at Mount Horeb (Sinai) where Moses had received the law and Israel had camped for a year. It took Moses forty years to make his journey from here to the Holy Land, but it seems Elijah made the trip in forty days (verse 8).

SUMMIT OF SINAI—The discouraged prophet went into a cave here for some time and his experiences were quite as wonderful as Moses' had been many years before at this same place. From this mountain fastness Elijah returned, a

SUMMIT OF SINAI

Von Gebhardt

ELIJAH EXHAUSTED

renewed man, to execute the will of God. 1 Kings 19: 9-14.

CHAPEL OF ELIJAH—SINAI

CHAPEL OF ELIJAH—SINAI—This chapel is dedicated to Elijah. It is on Mount Sinai, where it is said the prophet communed with God for forty days as Moses had done. It was because of this incident that Elijah was associated with Moses at the transfiguration of Jesus many centuries later on another mountain hundreds of miles to the north of Sinai.

ABEL-MEHOLAH

ABEL-MEHOLAH—Elijah is now directed by the Lord to go to Damascus and anoint Hazael, king of Syria, and to locate Jehu and anoint him as future king of Israel. He was then to seek one Elisha at Abel-

NEAR APHEK

Meholah and anoint him to be his own successor.

ELIJAH AND ELISHA—Elijah anointed these persons as he was instructed. He found Elisha plowing and symbolized his mission by placing his mantle on the shoulders of his successor, and they sacrificed the twelve yoke of oxen with which Elisha had been plowing, and gave the meat to the poor in the neighborhood. 1 Kings 19: 19-21.

NEAR APHEK—Ben-hadad, in the meantime, came against Samaria with two hundred and twenty thousand men, but by a ruse directed by a prophet, the army was scattered in confusion. One hundred thousand perished, and

EAST SHORE, SEA OF GALILEE

Carey

ELIJAH AND ELISHA

when they reached Aphek, east of the Sea of Galilee, twenty-seven thousand more lost their lives in an accident by the falling of the city walls. 1 Kings 20: 1-29.

East Shore, Sea of Galilee—Here on the plains, east of Galilee, Ahab overtook the Syrians, whose number had been greatly depleted. Benhadad humbled himself in sackcloth, and his life was spared. Ahab was met here by the prophet, who predicted his murder and the near approach of the close of Omri's dynasty. 1 Kings 20: 30-43.

NABOTH'S VINEYARD

Naboth's Vineyard—Naboth of Jezreel owned a vineyard here, and Ahab desired this for a garden as it was near to the temporary royal palace, but the property was not for sale. The petulant king was so disappointed that he went to bed and refused to eat. 1 Kings 21: 1-12.

Jezreel—General View—Jezebel, however, concocted a scheme whereby Naboth was falsely convicted of blasphemy against God and the king, and he was stoned to death outside the city, and the property was confiscated (verses 13 and 14).

Ahab Denounced—This heartless incident called

JEZREEL—GENERAL VIEW

Elijah again to Jezreel. He met Ahab at the well of Naboth and predicted a speedy and most horrible death to both Ahab and Jezebel. But the king humbled himself before the prophet and a respite was granted, but finally the end came according to Elijah's word. 1 Kings 21: 25-29.

JERUSALEM—King Asa died in the fourth year of the reign of Ahab. He had been ruler of Judah forty-one years. Asa had been an unusual monarch and was buried with great honors (2 Chron. 16: 14) in the Holy City. Jehoshaphat, his son, succeeded him and not only became a close friend of Ahab, but married his daughter, Athaliah. 2 Kings 8:18.

JERUSALEM

Rooke

AHAB DENOUNCED

RAMOTH -GILEAD

RAMOTH—GILEAD—While visting Ahab, Jehoshaphat was persuaded to accompany his father-in-law in an effort to regain Ramoth-Gilead (1 Kings 22: 1-4). There had been no war for three years, but the Syrians had revived after their experience at Aphek, and still held the old city of Ramoth in the mountains of Gilead.

DEATH OF AHAB

DEATH OF AHAB—Ahab could not be true even to a friend. He made it appear to the enemy that Jehoshaphat was himself, and for a while, during the battle, the enemy aimed every shot at Jehoshaphat, believing him to be Ahab. Ahab was costumed

as a common soldier, but he was struck with an arrow, which in a few hours caused his death. As the sun began to set his life slipped away. 1 Kings 22: 29-36.

BURIAL OF KING AHAB — Ahab had reigned twenty-one years in great splendor in his "Ivory Palace" in Samaria, so called ruins of which still remain, and they brought him there for burial. When the servants came to wash the chariot in which Ahab had been slain, the dogs had licked up his blood as Elijah had predicted. 1 Kings 22: 37-40.

AHAZIAH'S ILLNESS

AHAZIAH'S ILLNESS — Ahab was succeeded by his son Ahaziah, who injured himself through a fall. He was paid a visit by Elijah, who informed him that his injury was fatal. Ahaziah lived two years, however, and as he had no son, he was succeeded by his brother Jehoram. This was in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, of Jerusalem. 2 Kings 1.

Rooke

BURIAL OF KING AHAB

THE JORDAN

THE JORDAN—Elijah at this time called upon his schools of prophets at Bethel, Gilgal, and Jericho in company with Elisha. As fifty prophets stood on the banks of the Jordan, Elijah smote the water with his mantle and it parted, and the two great prophets passed over on dry ground as Israel had done in the days of Joshua the great leader of Israel. 2 Kings 2: 1-8.

MOUNT NEBO

MOUNT NEBO—It was no doubt to Mount Nebo (where Moses died) that Elisha went with Elijah. Here then Elisha was promised a double portion of the spirit of prophecy. 2 Kings 2: 9-10.

CHARIOT OF FIRE—"And it came to pass as

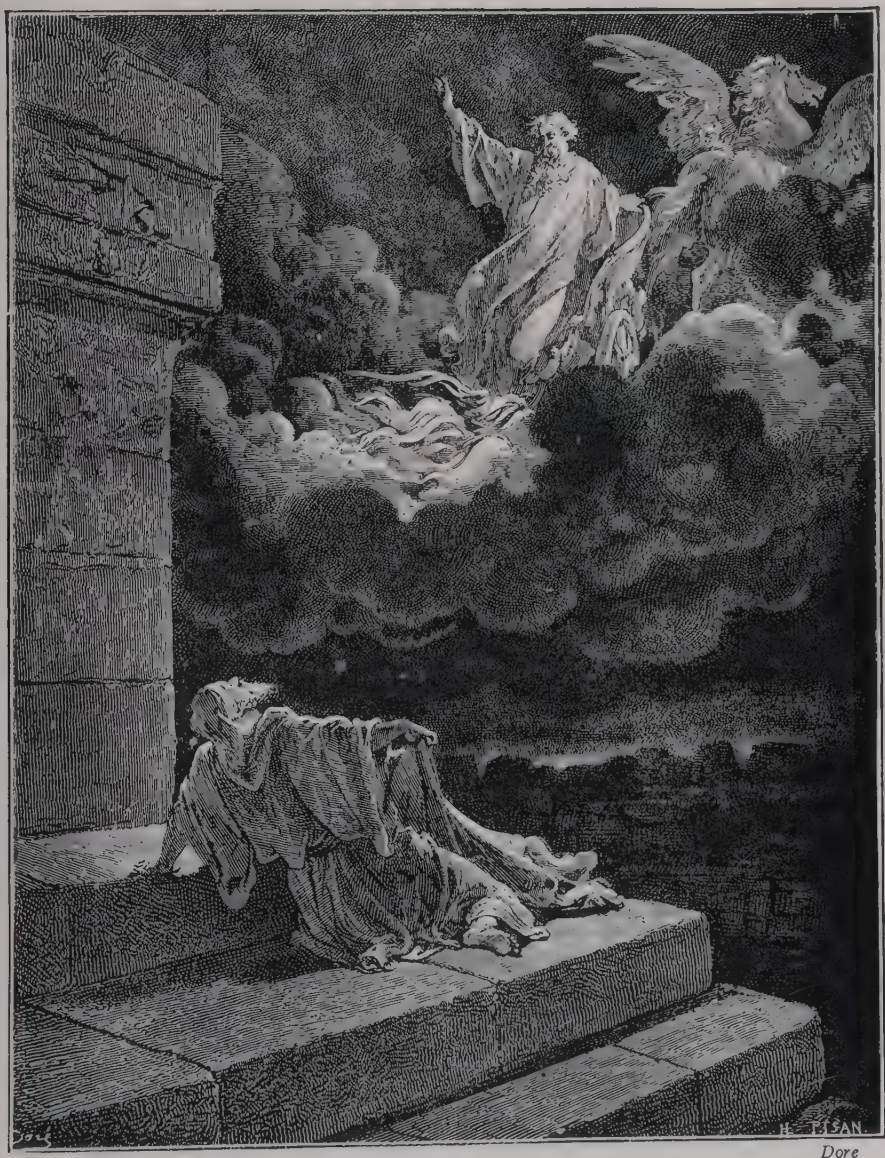
JERICHO

they still went on and talked, that behold there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire and parted them both asunder, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." And Elisha cried, my Father! And he picked up the mantle of Elijah and returned to Jordan. 2 Kings 2: 11-13.

JERICHO—Upon Elisha's return he was accepted first by the prophets of Jericho who went out to meet him (verse 15).

ELISHA'S FOUNTAIN—His ministry was begun by a miracle of sweetening the water of the spring of Jericho, which had been bitter, and therefore of no value whatsoever, either for drinking or irrigation. 2 Kings 2: 19-22.

ELISHA'S FOUNTAIN



Dore

CHARIOT OF FIRE

YOUNG LADS DEVOURED BY BEARS

YOUNG LADS DEVOURED BY BEARS — On his way to Bethel, Elisha was accosted by some young men, who taunted him and called him names. He had just gotten by them when two bears sprang from their hiding place in the nearby woods and destroyed forty-two of the gang. 2 Kings 2: 23-25.

MAP

MAP — Jehoram, Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom, accompanied by Elisha, went to fight the rebellious Moabites. When water became scarce Elisha had ditches dug throughout the camp and the

SHUNEM

next morning they were filled with water. The Moabites mistook the water for blood, and supposing their enemies had killed each other, rushed in after the spoil, and ran unexpectedly into the hands of Israel. 2 Kings 3: 4-27.

SHUNEM—From there Elisha returned to Shunem, where, because of a friendly act he had done for them, a family set aside a room for him in their home. A son of their old age and their great delight, was one day, while in the harvest field, stricken with sunstroke and brought home dead. 2 Kings 4: 1-20.

TOP MOUNT CARMEL

TOP MOUNT CARMEL—Elisha was at this time on Mount Carmel, some fifteen

Leighton

SON OF SHUNAMMITE RESTORED TO LIFE

miles away. The mother came to him here and implored the prophet to accompany her to Shunem, and if possible, restore the son to life. 2 Kings 4: 18-31.

JORDAN VALLEY

SON OF SHUNAMMITE RESTORED TO LIFE—Elisha finally granted her petition and the son's life was restored to him. 2 Kings 4: 32-37.

JORDAN VALLEY—The prophet then went to Gilgal (on the plain of Jordan) and prescribed for a number of people who had accidentally eaten some poisoned pottage, and they recovered. 2 Kings 4: 38-44.

SAMARIA

SAMARIA—Elisha, who had favored the king when he went against Moab, was no doubt welcome in Samaria, and we

next find the prophet in his own house in the capital city, possibly furnished by Jehoram himself.

Questions

Where did Elijah the prophet live? Why did he come to Samaria? What calamity did he predict? How did Jezebel receive him? Where did Elijah go? How was he fed? Where did he go from the Brook Cherith? Where is Zarephath? With whom did he lodge? What is said of her scarcity of food? Give the story of her dead son? Where did he arrange to meet Ahab? Where is Mount Carmel? Of what did he accuse Ahab? What test did he propose? Describe what happened? How many prophets of Baal? What was done to them? Where were they executed? Did it rain then? Who was waiting at Jezreel? Where is Jezreel? How did Jezebel receive the news? What did she then swear to do? Where did Elijah then go? What direction and how far is Sinai? How long did he stay at Sinai? Who was Elijah directed to anoint upon his return? Who was to succeed Elijah as prophet? Who now besieged Samaria? What was the result? What did Naboth own that Ahab desired? How did he get Naboth's property? What did Elijah say about the affair? How long did Asa live during the rule of Ahab? Who succeeded Asa? To whom was Jehoshaphat married? Who were Athaliah's parents? Tell about Ahab and Jehoshaphat at Ramoth-gilead. How did Ahab die? Where was he buried? How long did he rule Israel? What became of Elijah? From where was he taken up to heaven? Who was his successor? Tell of Elisha's part in the war with the Moabites. What miracle did Elisha do at Shunam? Was Elisha in favor with the king? Where did Elisha have a residence?

CLOSE OF THE OMRI DYNASTY

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER XXVII

The effort of Jezebel to introduce the religion of Baal into Israel brings Elijah into prominence. He boldly denounces Baal and predicts a great famine as a retribution for the departure from the true God. Elijah fled for his life, but returned after three years and challenged the prophets of Baal, which resulted in the execution of four hundred and fifty of them on the slopes of Mount Carmel. The antagonism of Jezebel drove the great prophet into hiding again, and he wandered as far as Mount Sinai. When he returned this time he came with Divine authority to anoint Hazael, king of Syria; Jehu, king of Israel, and Elisha as his successor. He was translated to heaven from Mount Nebo by a "chariot of fire" and his mantle fell upon Elisha. In the meantime, Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, married Ahab's daughter —Athaliah—and the two kings were on very friendly terms. Ahab was succeeded by Ahaziah and Jehoram, and another Jehoram had ascended the throne of Judah. The Judean king was nephew of the king of Israel. Elisha was in the good graces of both rulers and lived in the city of Samaria, the headquarters of Israel's king.

Rooke

AHAB AND NABOTH

Marillier

MAN OF VALOR

Chapter XXVII

CLOSE OF THE OMRI DYNASTY

2 Kings 5-13

Man of Valor—Naaman, captain of the hosts of the king of Syria, living in Damascus, discovered one day that he was a leper. "He was a mighty man of valor," and of high social standing, but being a leper he at once was isolated from all contact with society and could only mingle with those segregated like himself, because of his loathsome malady. 2 Kings 5: 1.

LEPERS

Lepers — The most pathetic sights in the Holy Land are the groups of lepers to be seen on the highways (usually near the city), as they piteously cry "unclean! unclean!" and beg for alms.

House of Naaman—The new government, however, is housing these unfortunates now, and the medical profession is doing much to prevent the spread of the disease throughout the country. Heretofore many of them refused to enter the homes prepared for them, but now it is compulsory. The ruins of the house of Naaman are still pointed out in Damascus,

HOUSE OF NAAMAN

and a part of the premises has been converted into an asylum for these sad people, whose malady is sure to end in a premature death.

NAAMAN—From the pompous position Naaman occupied a few days ago, he retrogrades into an outcast physically, and his dejection can only be understood by one who has had a like experience. 2 Kings 5: 1.

IMPLORES HIS GODS—All the magic of his native priests in Damascus failed, and though he approached his gods sincerely, he still remained a leper.

THE JEWISH MAIDEN—A Jewish maiden had been brought to Damascus, a cap-

NAAMAN

tive of a recent invasion of Samaria, and had become maid to Naaman's wife. When the maiden recognized the unfortunate man's predicament, she assured her mistress that a certain man of God in Samaria could unquestionably heal the captain of his leprosy (verses 2 and 3).

IMPLORES HIS GODS

King Sends Leper to Samaria—The information reached the king of Syria, and he at once sent Naaman on his way to Samaria to seek this wonderful man. Supposing he could be none less than the king of Israel, a letter was dispatched to him; and Naaman, though perhaps with little hope, took up the

THE JEWISH MAIDEN

KING SENDS LEPER TO SAMARIA

journey with all haste (verses 4 and 5).

NAAMAN PRESENTS HIMSELF—Following all the misunderstandings and wars between Syria and Israel, it must have been very disconcerting to Naaman to thus have to humble himself. But the circumstances justified, and Naaman presented himself to the Jewish monarch, assuring him that he confidently believed Israel's king could do as the little maid had said (verse 6).

NAAMAN PRESENTS HIMSELF

KING OF ISRAEL ANGERED—When the king had heard Naaman's story

he first thought the visitor was a spy, and if not, that he must have been playing a huge joke on his dignity. He became very angry and tore his clothes, and bade him begone, for he said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send to me to recover a man from his leprosy" (verse 7), and he bade him leave his presence.

KING OF ISRAEL ANGERED

NAAMAN GOES TO ELISHA

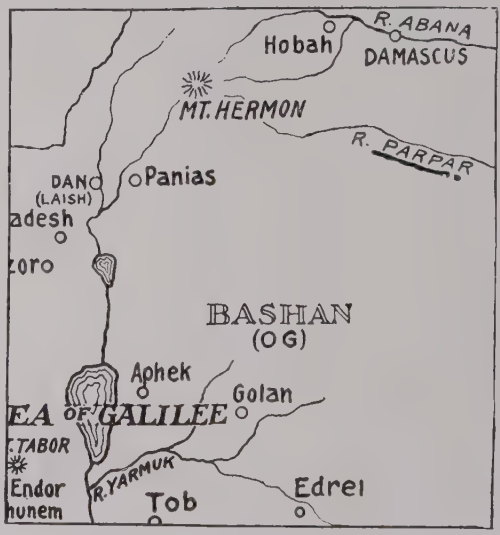
NAAMAN GOES TO ELISHA—Elisha was in the city at this time and had heard of Naaman's unusual mission. He immediately asked the king to send the leper to him, and

NAAMAN LEAVES IN RAGE

accordingly, Naaman drove his chariot pompously to the residence of the prophet. "Go dip yourself in the Jordan seven times," came the words of Elisha, "and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean" (verses 8 and 10).

NAAMAN LEAVES IN RAGE—The directions were not what Naaman had vainly imagined they would be, and he turned away in a rage. "No, I will not wash in the filthy Jordan. Its waters cannot compare with our rivers Pharpar and Abana." And Naaman turned away despairing a cure in Israel (verse 11).

MAP—The Abana is a beautiful and never failing stream. Its source is in Mount Hermon,



MAP

and from the melting snow is sent a crystal stream of refreshing water down to Damascus. The Pharpar, though not so beautiful, never dries up.

THE RIVER ABANA

THE RIVER ABANA — The Abana, because of its high source, comes bounding through the heart of Syria, making it a veritable garden.

ABANA IN DAMASCUS—The river flows through the midst of the Syrian capital and but for its water there would never have been a Damascus. For this reason it has ever been a sacred river to the population of this great city.

ABANA IN DAMASCUS

COURT IN DAMASCUS HOME —Of all cities in the Orient, Damascus is best supplied with water. It flows

COURT IN DAMASCUS HOME

down the streets, is carried through the better homes, and waters their beautiful courts (for which the city is noted). They have no standpipe, but water flows through aqueducts to all parts of the city, and instead of turning a faucet they may dip their cup into the stream that is flowing through their kitchen or gorgeous court.

THE PHARPAR RIVER.—The Pharpar flows lazily through a flatter country than the Abana, and skirts the south side of the city. Both rivers after they have passed Damascus lose themselves in the sandy plains of the Arabian desert.

THE PHARPAR RIVER

SOURCE OF THE JORDAN.—Naaman would

have given some consideration to the prophet's directions if he had said Pharpar or Abana. But the Jordan! Impossible. Yet the Jordan finds its source in the same Mount Hermon, only on the opposite slope.

SOURCE OF THE JORDAN

NAAMAN'S SERVANT—But Naaman's servant was more sensible about the matter than his master. Reasoning with Naaman, he said, "If the prophet had said do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather then when he saith to thee wash and be clean." Suppose you accept his challenge. (verse 13).

NAAMAN'S SERVANT

NAAMAN DECIDES TO TRY

NAAMAN DECIDES TO TRY—Yielding to the commonsense appeal of his servant, he finally decided that it was at least worth trying, and timidly approached the river Jordan.

NAAMAN HEALED—But he was relieved of all his doubts when he had fully complied with the prophet's words. He had gone down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, and his flesh came again as the flesh of a little child, and he was clean (verse 14).

NAAMAN OFFERS PRESENTS—Rejoicing over the remarkable cure that had been wrought and deeply grateful to the prophet for his goodness, he returned to Samaria with

NAAMAN HEALED

costly presents for the man of God. But Elisha promptly and emphatically refused his gifts (verses 15 and 18).

NAAMAN OFFERS PRESENTS

GO IN PEACE —Elisha said unto him, "Go in peace," and Naaman departed from him a cleaner and wiser and more humble man (verse 19), declaring, "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in the land of Israel" (verses 15 and 19).

GO IN PEACE

HILL OF DOTHAN — Naaman's experience evidently had little, if any, effect upon the king of Syria, for soon afterward his army was encamped at Dothan. Elisha and his servant spent a night on the hill there, and in the morn-

HILL OF DOTHAN

ing they found themselves surrounded by the hosts of Syria. 2 Kings 6: 8-14.

HEAVENLY HOST—The servant was much alarmed until Elisha prayed that his eyes might be opened and he beheld the "mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." The Syrians were smitten with blindness, and Elisha led them into the city of Samaria where the king of Israel resided. The king's first impulse was to destroy the hosts of Syria but he was forbidden by Elisha, and they were sent to their homeland unharmed after they had been well fed. 2 Kings 6: 15-23.

PLAIN OF SAMARIA

PLAIN OF SAMARIA—But Benhadad was not a king who could be

HEAVENLY HOST

so easily defeated. The next year he camped on these plains surrounding Samaria and bottled Israel up in their capital. A famine followed which was so severe that women ate their own children. Elisha was also in the city at the time. His life was threatened by the king because he had not planned some miraculous escape for Israel, but relief finally came in a most unexpected manner. 2 Kings 6: 24-33.

THE FAMINE RELIEVED

THE FAMINE RELIEVED—Four half-starved lepers lay at the gate of Samaria who ventured to pillage the camp of Syria, but when they got to the camp it was totally deserted. The enemy had evidently mistaken a distant thunder storm for the rumbling of chariots—which they thought to be reinforcements from another country, and they fled, leaving everything, except, perhaps, their weapons. The famine was relieved by the spoils left by the Syrians. 2 Kings 7.

DAMASCUS—The recent campaign must have affected the health of Ben-hadad. He took sick when he returned and Elisha, who went to Damascus at this time, was visited by Hazael to inquire whether Ben-hadad would recover. (Hazael, it will be remembered, had been anointed by Elijah at God's command to succeed Ben-hadad (1 Kings 19: 15). Hazael became king of

DAMASCUS

Syria after he had smothered his predecessor to death. 2 Kings 8: 7-15.

JERUSALEM—During this period Joram, the second son of Ahab, was king of Israel, and for the first five years his Judean contemporary was Jehoshaphat, son of Asa. Jehoshaphat reigned twenty-five years and was buried in Jerusalem. He was succeeded by his son Jehoram, who continued friendly relations with the king of Israel. Jezebel was the mother of Joram and the grandmother of Jehoram. 2 Kings 8: 16-17.

THE EDOMITES ROUTED—Edom now revolts against Judah, but is subdued by Jehoram, who was reinforced by

JERUSALEM

Hoet

THE EDOMITES ROUTED

Joram of Israel. Jehoram reigned eight years and died in the twelfth year of Joram. He was succeeded by his son Ahaziah, who was assassinated a year later. 2 Kings 8: 18-24.

MAP

MAP—Ramoth-gilead was still disputed territory. Hazael, the new king of Syria, met Joram in battle here and in the combat the latter received a slight wound, and went to Jezreel to recover. Ahaziah, when he got news of it, came to Jezreel to pay his uncle a visit, and remained several days. 2 Kings 8: 25-29.

RAMOTH-GILEAD

RAMOTH-GILEAD—It seemed to be the time to call a halt to Baal worship, which had Israel well in its grip,

and was creeping into Judah. Elisha dispatched a prophet to Ramoth-gilead where Jehu had been left in command (in the absence of Joram), and he was anointed king of Israel and a new dynasty was to begin. 2 Kings 9: 1-10.

JEHU AT JEZREEL—Jehu sped to Jezreel as fast as his chariot horses could take him. Joram attempted to flee for his life, but an arrow from Jehu's bow pierced the king through the heart, and he was buried in Naboth's vineyard, where Jezebel had heartlessly stoned the good citizen, Naboth, a few years before. 2 Kings 9: 11-26.

JENIN

JENIN—Ahaziah, who was with Joram, fled toward Judah, but he was overtaken by Jehu at Gur (which is believed to be Jenin), where he was fatally wounded, but he got as far as Megiddo, about six miles west, before he died. Thus ended the dynasty of Omri. And the house of David mourned for their youthful king Ahaziah. 2 Kings 9: 26-29.

TOWER OF JEZREEL—Jezebel, Ahab's widow, was still living and resided in the tower of Jezreel. She still retained her haughty spirit. She dressed her hair and painted her faded cheeks and as she looked out of the

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JEHU AT JEZREEL

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DEATH OF JEZEBEL

upper window she mockingly spoke to Jehu, who at this time had returned from Jenin (Gur), a few miles south. 2 Kings 9: 30-32.

TOWER OF JEZREEL

DEATH OF JEZEBEL—She was thrown headlong from the window by her own servants and was crushed to death by the hoofs of the prancing horses of Jehu's soldiers. 2 Kings 9: 33.

JEZEBEL'S AWFUL FATE—As Jehu came in to eat he said to the servants: "Go, see now this cursed woman," and they went to bury her, since she was a royal personage; but when they had come to the place where she had died, the dogs had well-nigh consumed her body, as Elijah had predicted

JEZEBEL'S AWFUL FATE

just after the murder of Naboth. 2 Kings 9: 35-37.

Idols of Israel—Jehu now started a reform by destroying all images and places of Baal worship. He slew all the members of the house of Ahab, and revived the religion of Jeroboam, the worship of the golden calf.

Infant King Joash—Athaliah, Ahab's daughter, and mother of Ahaziah, still resides in Jerusalem. When she heard of the murder of her mother (Jezebel) by Jehu, she attempted to wipe out the house of David by way of revenge. Only the infant Joash was saved by his aunt (Jehosheba), who succeeded in hiding the baby in the temple for six years. Jehoida was priest during this time and attended to the proper care and instruction of the boy. 2 Kings 11: 1-3.

IDOLS OF ISRAEL

Murder of Athaliah—Joash was crowned by Jehoiada at the temple when he was seven years old. When Athaliah heard the commotion caused by the jubilant crowd at the coronation, she came from the palace crying, "Treason! Treason!" She was immediately slain at her palace, which stood near the south

Coypel

INFANT KING JOASH

wall of the present city. 2 Kings 11: 4-16.

MURDER OF ATHALIAH

JOASH REPAIRS THE WALLS—The reign of Joash was one of reform, though even he never destroyed the high places. He also repaired the walls of Jerusalem, which had been neglected since the advent of Athaliah (Ahab's daughter) into the Holy City. He also paid tribute to Hazael of Damascus rather than to go to war with him. 2 Kings 12: 1-18.

JOASH REPAIRS THE WALLS

JOASH SLAIN—Joash was slain by Jozachar and Jehozabad, two of his servants, at Millo, the southwest corner of the temple en-

BEN-HADAD

closure, but the murder was the result of a private grievance rather than public discontent (2 Kings 12: 19-21). Joash was forty years old when he died and he was buried on Zion.

BEN-HADAD—Jehu died in the twenty-third year of Joash and his son, Jehoahaz, became king of Israel. Hazael, of Syria, had been also succeeded by his son, Ben-hadad II, who had made life miserable for Israel. He almost destroyed them and cut their forces down to fifty horsemen and ten chariots. Joash (of Israel) followed his father Jehoahaz, and Joash (of Judah) lived to see three years of his reign. 2 Kings 13: 1.

ABEL-MEHOLAH—Elisha the prophet died during the reign of Joash (of Israel), and he was buried at his old home in Abel-Meholah near Bethshan. He had proved himself a worthy successor of Eli-

ABEL-MEHOLAH

Luycken

JOASH SLAIN

Murch

ELISHA'S LAST PROPHECY

jah and the two names will always be very closely associated.

Elisha's Last Prophecy — Elisha was much revered by Israel, and Joash came to visit the prophet in his closing hours. Elisha bade him shoot an arrow from the window of his chamber, and by this token he made his last prophecy, *i. e.*, that the yoke of Syria should be thrown off by King Joash. 2 Kings 13: 14-21.

Questions

Who was Naaman? Where did he live? What was his affliction? Is cure for leprosy known to the medical profession? Who was Naaman's wife's maid? What did she suggest? Who sent Naaman to Samaria? To whom did Naaman first go? How did the king receive him? What word did Elisha send to Naaman? What did Elisha tell him to do? How did Naaman receive the instructions? Where are the rivers Abana and Pharpar? What was the result of Naaman's obedience? What did Naaman then do? What experience did Elisha have at Dothan? How did he capture a whole army? Where did he lead the blinded army? What happened to them at Samaria? What was Elisha's mission to Damascus? How did Hazael become king of Syria? What happened to Joram at Ramoth-Gilead? Who came to see him from Jerusalem? Why did Jehu come to Jezreel? How did Jehu become king of Israel? Where was Jezebel now living? What became of her? Tell of Jehu's reform? What did Athaliah do at Jerusalem? Why did she seek to kill all heirs to the throne? Who alone was saved from her tyranny? How old was Joash now? Where did they hide him for seven years? Who was priest at Jerusalem? What happened when Joash was seven? How did it

affect Athaliah? What became of her? Was there reform during Joash's reign? Describe the death of Joash? Who visited Elisha during his last sickness? What prediction did the prophet make? Where was Elisha buried?

THE FALL OF SAMARIA

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER XXVIII

Elisha lived in Samaria, and Jehoram was king of Israel when the miraculous cure of Naaman the leper of Damascus was effected by the prophet. Jehu murdered both the king of Israel and of Judah, and destroyed all the heirs of Ahab. Athaliah destroyed all the heirs to the throne of Judah, except Joash, an infant, and when he was crowned, seven years later, Athaliah was put to death in her palace in Jerusalem. Jehu destroyed every place of Baal worship and revived the religious system of Jeroboam. He died after a rule of twenty-eight years and was succeeded by Jehoahaz, and he in turn by Joash. Elisha, after a long and faithful ministry, passes away immediately following a prophecy to Joash that his reign would be successful. Joash of Israel and Amaziah of Judah ascended their respective thrones probably in the same year, and the friendly relations that had existed between the northern and the southern kingdoms for a hundred years now came to a close.

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FALL OF NINEVEH

Chapter XXVIII
THE FALL OF SAMARIA
2 Kings 14-18

South Shore Dead Sea—Amaziah succeeded his father Joash of Jerusalem and his first act was to execute the murderers of his father. His first military venture was to reconquer Edom and accordingly he engaged with them at the south shore of the Dead Sea, where Edom was driven southward with a loss of ten thousand men.

SOUTH SHORE DEAD SEA

PETRA

Petra—Edom retreated to Selah (the rock), which to-day is called Petra. Amaziah changed its name to Joktheel after he had decisively defeated the Edomites and drove them from the country. 2 Kings 14: 5-7.

BETHSHEMESH

BETHSHEMESH—The friendly relations between Judah and Israel which had existed since the days of Ahab and Jehoshaphat (which really amounted to the subjugation of Judah), now came to a close. A battle was fought at Bethshemesh on the border of Sharon, and Amaziah was not only beaten but he was captured. 2 Kings 14: 8-13.

NORTH WALL JERUSALEM—Joash returned with the captured king of Jerusalem and tore down six hundred feet of the north wall of the city from the gate of Ephraim. After robbing the temple to pay his indemnity to Israel, Amaziah was restored to his throne and outlived his con-

NORTH WALL JERUSALEM

queror by several years. 2 Kings 14: 13-14.

LACHISH

LACHISH—After a stormy reign of twenty-nine years a conspiracy arose against Amaziah in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish, some thirty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem. He was diligently pursued and slain by the rebels, and his dead body brought back to Jerusalem on horses and buried in the city of David. 2 Kings 14: 17-20.

GATH-HEPHER—Jeroboam II succeeded his father, Joash of Israel, and it is during his reign that we are introduced to the prophet Jonah. Jonah was born at Gath-hepher, which is near to, if not identical with, Nazareth in Galilee. His first appearance was to Jeroboam II, to whom he predicted great success and an extension of his territory from

GATH-HEPHER

MAP

the Orontes to the Dead Sea. 2 Kings 14: 23-27.

MAP—God mapped out a great trip and an unprecedented mission for Jonah. He was directed to go to Nineveh, the great city of Nimrod, the capital of Assyria, and there preach to the people.

RUINS OF NINEVEH—Nineveh is represented to have been a "great city," for a long time the most beautiful city in the world. Its ruins to-day speak of more grandeur than those of either Babylon or Shushan. It is said to have been steeped in the deepest wickedness and Jonah was directed to go there "and cry against it; for, said God, their wickedness is come up before me." Jonah 1: 1-2.

RUINS OF NINEVEH

JOPPA—At this time we find Jonah at Joppa

on the Mediterranean Sea, fifty miles west of Jerusalem. He had heard of the great city of Nimrod, and being a mere countryman, he no doubt felt that it would be useless for him to meet a people so cultured, and that it would simply mean the loss of his life, and at best would not be worthwhile.

JOPPA

JOPPA AND THE SEA—Joppa is the principal port of Palestine to-day, and it seems to have been then, for in the harbor out there lay a ship soon to sail to Tarshish (Spain). So Jonah boarded this vessel, knowing that it would take him in the opposite direction to that which God had directed and hoping thus to escape this hazardous mission. Jonah 1:3.

JOPPA AND THE SEA

At Sea—The ship had gotten but a little way out to sea when a great storm arose, and the superstitious sailors believing the storm to have been caused by the wrath of some angry god, Jonah confessed that it was he against whom this anger was directed, and he was thrown overboard and swallowed by a great fish that God had prepared. Jonah 1: 4-17.

Jonah Delivered—We are told that Jonah remained inside the fish for three days and was finally delivered to dry land. Jonah, now realizing that he could not escape God or duty, went to Nineveh as he had been directed, and there were no bounds to his success.

JONAH DELIVERED

Jonah at Nineveh—Arriving at this "great city," Jonah bravely proclaimed the message he was sent to deliver that within forty days the entire city would be destroyed. He was surprised at the effect of his own preaching. "The people of Nineveh believed God; and they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them," and God therefore did not destroy them. Jonah 3: 1-10.

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AT SEA

Dore

JONAH AT NINEVEH

A TEMPORARY BOOTH

A TEMPORARY BOOTH—"But it displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was angry. . . Then he went outside the walls and sat on the east side of the city and there made him a booth and sat under it in the shade, till he might see what would become of the city." Using, by way of illustration, a gourd whose withering Jonah so greatly lamented, God very strikingly indicated why he should show forbearance to a city with a population of more than six-score thousand persons. Jonah 4: 1-11.

AN ASSYRIAN IDOL

AN ASSYRIAN IDOL—Whether it was Jonah's preaching or not, we learn

TEKOAH

that Assyria was not hostile to Israel, and Jeroboam enjoyed more prosperity than any king of Israel before his time. The relations between Israel and Assyria became so friendly that Jeroboam set up some of the Assyrian gods in his own domain.

AMOS—The prophet Amos also lived in this day. He stood before Israel and openly condemned the worship of these gods, and predicted that soon Israel would be carried away into captivity beyond Damascus, to the very country from whence came these idols. Amos 5: 26-27.

TEKOAH—Amos was born at Tekoah, five or six miles south of Bethlehem, in a semi-desert section of Judea. Though he was a

WILDERNESS OF TEKOAH

Dore

AMOS

Mellery

HOSEA

native of Judah, his operations were in Israel. A true prophet of God knows no political bounds.

Wilderness of Tekoah—Like David, Amos was a shepherd. In fact, the "Shepherd field" of David was in sight of the rougher grazing lands of Tekoah. Amos was as brave as Elijah and as poetic as David, and his words have the ring of a prophet indeed.

Bethel—At Bethel, Amos denounced the half-hearted priest and predicted his death, and again, also, the captivity of Israel from which they should never return. His denunciation was so scathing that the priest reported him to Jeroboam, but Amos was never molested. Amos 7: 10-17.

BETHEL

Hosea—Jeroboam lived long enough to hear most of the thunderings of Hosea, whose messages, like those of Amos, were directed against Israel's immoral life. Hosea was Amos amplified, only Hosea was a subject of Jeroboam, while Amos was from Judah. Jeroboam, while he prospered in material things, must have suffered much under the fire of these prophets. He reigned forty-one years, was buried in Samaria, and was succeeded by his son Zechariah, who was the last of the house of Jehu.

SCENE NEAR ELOTH

SCENE NEAR ELOTH—Azariah (Uzziah) was enthroned in Jerusalem after the murder of his father, which was in the twenty-seventh year of the reign of Jeroboam II. He fortified Eloth and recovered from the Philistines Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod, and brought as much prosperity to Judah as Jeroboam had to Israel.

WALL OF JERUSALEM—Uzziah also repaired the north wall of Jerusalem, which had been broken down in his father's day. He created an army of three hundred and seven thousand and five hundred men, and built up his own country, leaving his outside neighbors pretty much alone.

WALL OF JERUSALEM

DELIVERING A KING TO HIS FATE

A GROUP OF LEPERS

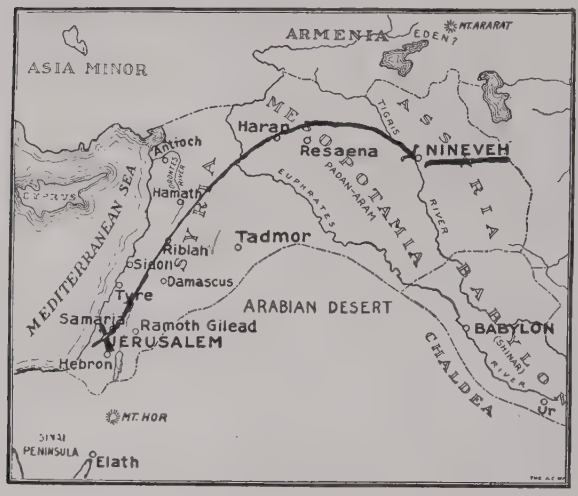
A Group of Lepers—But King Uzziah became afflicted with leprosy (believed to have been about the time of Jeroboam's death) and was compelled to isolate himself from the people, as was required of all lepers. The duties of government were, however, carried on by his son Jotham for the remaining thirty-eight years of his reign.

Delivering a King to His Fate—The throne of Israel now became the prize of a succession of conspirators, and the end of the kingdom was not far off. Zechariah was murdered by Shallum after a reign of six months. Shallum after one month's reign was slain by Menahem, who succeeded in pass-

EAST GATE OF JERUSALEM

ing his throne to his son Pekahiah, and after two years he was put to the sword by Pekah, one of his officers. All these kings of Israel came and went during the single reign of Uzziah of Judah.

East Gate of Jerusalem—Jotham of Judah, who because of the leprosy of Uzziah, had been vicegerent for thirty-eight years, now succeeds his father. He strengthened certain gates of the city and was much like his father in the general building up of his kingdom. Otherwise, nothing of any consequence characterized his reign of sixteen years. He was succeeded by his son, Ahaz, in the seventeenth year of Pekah of Samaria. 2 Kings 16: 1.



MAP

Map—Now comes the beginning of the end of Israel. They have become bankrupt paying tribute to Assyria and now that they can pay no more, Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, invades all northern Israel and carries its people away to Nineveh. 2 Kings 15: 29.

Damascus—The kings of Israel and Syria attempted to force Ahaz to join them in a confederacy against Assyria, but instead Ahaz joined Tiglath-pileser, who

Dore

ISAIAH

the next year took Damascus, put its king Rezin to death, and carried his people to Assyria. 2 Kings 16: 2-9.

DAMASCUS

Isaiah—The prophet Isaiah now appears. He pleads with Ahaz not to join Assyria (Isa. 3: 12). It would not be necessary. He saw the end of Judah's enemies—Israel and Assyria, and assured Ahaz that Assyria would not disturb him if he conducted his affairs properly and trusted in the Lord, but Ahaz flippantly turned the great statesman-prophet away. Isa. 7:3-13.

A SYRIAN ALTAR

A Syrian Altar—Ahaz went in person to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser, where they concluded their arrangements. While there he saw an attractive

VALLEY OF HINNOM

heathen altar, and, possibly to show his liberality from a religious standpoint, he had it duplicated and placed in front of the temple of Jerusalem. 2 Kings 16: 10-16.

VALLEY OF HINNOM—Ahaz led Judah into gross idolatry. He even revived Moloch of the Ammonites in the valley of Hinnom, and recommended it by sacrificing his own son in the fire of the hideous god. 2 Kings 16: 2-4.

GATE OF SAMARIA—In the meantime, in the twelfth year of Ahaz's reign, one Hoshea murdered Pekah at Samaria and seized the throne of Israel. The murder was probably recommended by Assyria, to whom Hoshea was to pay a yearly

GATE OF SAMARIA

Dore

FALL OF SAMARIA

tribute, which he kept up for six years.

MAP

FALL OF SAMARIA (Camp)—Hoshea applied to Sobak (or So), king of Egypt, for help, which was promised, but the promise was never fulfilled, and the Assyrians, when they heard of it, sent a large army into Israel and they besieged Samaria three years. At the end of this time it fell to rise no more. Sargon was king of Assyria at this time, for Shalmaneser IV, who succeeded Tiglath-pileser, had died during the siege of Samaria. 2 Kings 17: 23. B. C. 722.

SAMARITANS OF SHECHEM

MAP—Most of the people (and all the higher classes), were carried away to Media and other remote parts of Assyria. To replace these, people from Babylon and other parts were sent later into the territory of Israel

and the races amalgamated, regardless of color, nationality or religion.

SAMARITANS OF SHECHEM—The result of these marriages is the Samaritan people, who hereafter will be always known by this name. A remnant of this amalgamated people is still to be found at Nablus (Shechem) and are a distinctive type to this day.

LIONS OF SAMARIA—The Assyrians brought their gods with them and Israel, who had had but little scruples regarding idols, combined theirs with the newcomers, and brought out a conglomerated and meaningless religious system. We are told that the Lord sent lions which destroyed the worshipers, whereupon the king of Assyria sent a Jewish captive, priest to Samaria, who taught them "the law of the God of the land"—Jehovah. 2 Kings 17: 25-28.

SAMARITAN HIGH PRIEST

SAMARITAN HIGH PRIEST—The account represents them as being half idolators, "fearing the Lord and serving their own gods," but later they were much reformed. To this day this sect supports its own priests and professes to keep strictly the law of Moses.

Dore

LIONS OF SAMARIA

THE SAMARITAN SCROLL

THE SAMARITAN SCROLL—These Samaritans possess a manuscript of the Pentateuch, the most ancient in the world. It is said to have been written by the grandson of Eleazer, the high priest, who succeeded Aaron. Whether it is this old we do not know, but it is a rare copy and is conceded by authorities to be of great value.

THE SAMARITAN TEMPLE—On historic Mount Gerizim is their temple, if you could call it such, and the feasts are kept here just as they were in Jerusalem, and all Jewish ceremonies are adhered to, to the letter.

THE SAMARITAN TEMPLE

FEAST OF THE PASSOVER—The greatest feast is the Passover. At

FEAST OF THE PASSOVER

this season they camp here for a week and the whole service is conducted step by step as was done by Israel upon their exodus from Egypt.

SAMARITAN TYPES—Notwithstanding this, they are a greedy, insolent, and unappreciative people to-day. They were originally, as now, despised by the Jews. In the time of Christ the Jews would walk miles around their territory rather than be guilty of setting foot upon it. (We will see more of their attitude later.)

CHURCH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST—So we bid farewell to Samaria forever, as far as the Jewish people are concerned. The atrocities which have been com-

SAMARITAN TYPES

CHURCH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

mitted here are too numerous and gruesome to be mentioned. Drunkenness, gluttony, and murder were once common here, and in fact the first heinous murder recorded in the New Testament was perhaps committed in Samaria—the beheading of John the Baptist, which followed the vulgar dance of Salome during the drunken carousal of King Herod and prominent Roman officers.

THRESHING FLOOR OF SAMARIA

THRESHING FLOOR OF SAMARIA—There is a threshing floor to-day where Ahab's ivory palace once stood. The gluttonous kings and reveling, murderous multitudes are no more, for Samaria is a deserted village.

STREET OF COLUMNS

STREET OF COLUMNS — Desolation reigns along the street of columns where the chariot wheels once rumbled, and the populace did their marketing. This was the market place in Herod's day and these columns then supported a marble roof, which extended from the East gate entirely across the city, a distance of a half mile or more, having been built about the same date of Herod's temple and Caesarea.

SAMARITAN IDOLS—Their gods lie buried and forgotten, and they are brought to sight only by the pick-axe of the workman, whose excavations are bringing many interesting stories to light, which extend back to the founder, Omri.

SAMARITAN IDOLS

THE VILLAGE—Even the tombs of Omri, Ahab, and nearly a score of other kings who were buried in Samaria are not pointed out and the capital city is nothing more than a squalid village. From the days of Omri, its founder, down to Herod the Great there were extravagant efforts made to beautify Samaria, but in spite of them the predictions of the prophet have come true. It is indeed "a faded flower."

THE VILLAGE

NATIVES OF SAMARIA

NATIVES OF SAMARIA—The inhabitants of this city once reveled in luxury, but to-day it is just the opposite. It is difficult for them to keep the wolf from the door, and in all Palestine there is not to be found a people more needy.

Questions

Who is now king of Judah? Was he friendly to Israel? Where did Judah and Israel meet in battle? What was the result? Tell of the last days of Amaziah? Who was prophet in Israel in the days of Jeroboam II? Where was Jonah born? What did he predict to the king? At what seaport do we find him? Where did God direct him to go? Did he obey God? What happened to him? Did he then go to Nineveh? What was the result of his preaching? Who was Amos? Where was he born? Where did he preach? What was the nature of his preaching? What malady did Uzziah contract? Who assisted him in state matters? To whom had Israel been paying tribute? Who was now king of Assyria? What did Tiglath-pileser do when Israel failed to pay? Where is Assyria? With whom did Ahaz confederate? Who was prophet in Judah? What did Isaiah advise Ahaz? How did Ahaz treat his advice? What sacrilege did Ahaz now commit? What idol did he worship? Describe the god Moloch? Who was the last king of Israel? How did Hoshea offend Assyria? What was the result? Who took Samaria? Where were the people taken? With whom did Assyria colonize the country? What of the marriages and religion? What were these amalgamated people called? Do any Samaritans remain to-day? Where? How were the religious matters settled? Are the Jews friendly toward the Samaritans? Why? Where is the Samaritan temple? Date B. C.? Describe modern Samaria?

THE DECLINE OF JUDAH

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER XXIX

During the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel, Amaziah and Uzziah were kings in Judah. Uzziah died of leprosy after fifty-two years, Jotham succeeded Uzziah, a rank idolator, whose kingdom became a tributary to Assyria in the third year of his reign. Jeroboam II ruled Israel forty-one years. Samaria, under a series of covetous aspirants to the throne, became the scene of high-handed murder, five kings having been slain in rapid succession by ambitious usurpers. Under Pekah (742 B. C.) a large number were taken captive by Tiglath-pileser to Nineveh. Hoshea was then appointed governor of Samaria, but he turned traitor to Assyria, and after a three years' siege Samaria fell (722 B. C.). Sargon, king of Assyria, died during the siege and the city was really taken by Sennacherib. The captured Israelites were replaced by other peoples who had been subjugated by Assyria, and who brought with them their different religious peculiarities. The several peoples amalgamated and this resulted in a distinct people to be known ever afterward as the Samaritans. Israel lost herself in Assyria. The Samaritans to this day cling to Samaria (only 150 left). Judah is now alone, and Hezekiah succeeds his wicked father—Ahaz.

Ciseri

DESPAIR OF ISRAEL

Philippoteau

THE BRAZEN SERPENT

Chapter XXIX

THE DECLINE OF JUDAH

2 Kings 18-24

The Brazen Serpent—Hezekiah came to the throne of Judah in the third year of Hoshea of Samaria. He immediately started a reform and his kingdom prospered. Idolatry had become so general that Judah was even guilty of burning incense to the brazen serpent which Moses had used in Kadesh, and in his war on idols, Hezekiah broke the relic to pieces. 2 Kings 18: 1-7.

TEMPLE SITE

Temple Site—In the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's rule, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, invaded Judah because they refused to pay tribute according to the agreement made by Ahaz. The result was that Hezekiah tore the gold from the doors of the temple to pay his fine and the back dues exacted by the Assyrian king. 2 Kings 18: 13-16.

Lachish—The Assyrian army is now encamped at Lachish and a committee headed by Rab-shakeh is sent to Hezekiah to ask the surrender of Jerusalem.

LACHISH

Finally, Isaiah was consulted by the king, who advised him not to hear to their demands. Hezekiah this time acted accordingly, and the committee returned to Lachish. 2 Kings 18: 17 to 19: 7.

THE LETTER SPREAD BEFORE THE LORD—Next, Rab-shakeh came with a letter making the request more threatening. Hezekiah spread the letter before the Lord in the temple and prayed. Isaiah was sent to instruct the king not to surrender, and to say that if he would trust the Lord all would be well. 2 Kings 19: 8-34.

THE LETTER SPREAD BEFORE THE LORD

THE DESTROYING ANGEL—"And it came to pass that night that the angel of the Lord went out and smote the camp of the Assyrians, and one hundred and fourscore and five thousand per-

Dore

THE DESTROYING ANGEL

ished. When men rose up early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. So Sennacherib, king of Assyria, departed and returned to Nineveh." 2 Kings 19: 35-36.

DEATH OF SENNACHERIB

DEATH OF SENNACHERIB—"And it came to pass as Sennacherib was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, smote him with a sword, and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esar-haddon, his son, reigned in his stead." 2 Kings 19: 37.

MAP—Berodach-Baladan, king of Babylon, fearful of Assyria, and probably, to gain the assistance of Judah, took occasion to visit Hezekiah with a present during a severe spell of sickness of the latter. But if Hezekiah had any

MAP

UPPER POOL OF GIHON

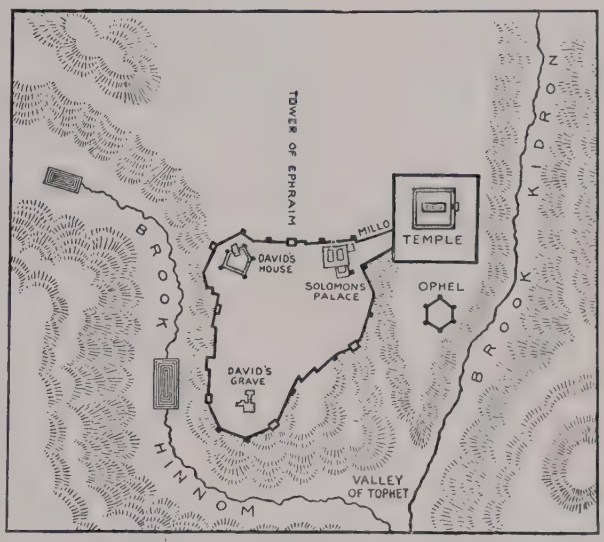
disposition to assist Babylon the opportunity never came, for soon after this the Babylonian king was defeated and driven from his capital. 2 Kings 20: 1-19.

Upper Pool of Gihon—Isaiah's counsel to Hezekiah has thus far been valuable indeed. But already the prophet has hinted that really Babylon is the power to be feared (verse 17). The king therefore begins to fortify the city, and to carry the water from pools outside the city through aqueducts to the inside.

Pool of Hezekiah—He is believed to have brought water to this pool (now called the pool of Hezekiah) from the "upper pool" outside the city.

POOL OF HEZEKIAH

JERUSALEM FROM SOUTHEAST — But the main part of Jerusalem—the old city—lay to the southeast on the hill Ophal. On the east of this hill outside the wall is another copious spring called Gihon.



JERUSALEM FROM SOUTHEAST

THE VIRGIN'S SPRING—The spring to-day is called the "Virgin's Fountain." It was skillfully sealed and a conduit was bored through the stony hill (underground all the way) to another pool which Hezekiah constructed inside the city walls, more than seventeen hundred feet from Gihon.

THE VIRGIN'S SPRING

POOL OF SILOAM

POOL OF SILOAM—The inside pool was not named, but now it is called Siloam, and in Jesus' day it was associated with the healing of a blind man who was directed to "go wash in the pool of Siloam" after Jesus had anointed his blinded eyes with clay. This is the pool of Siloam as it appears today.

AQUEDUCT—The conduit leading from the spring to the pool was lost sight of for centuries, but about forty years ago it was discovered by some of the courageous members of the American colony. This picture was made not far back of the rear of the "Virgin's Fountain," and as you can see is very spacious at this particular place.

AQUEDUCT

SMALL PART OF CHANNEL

SMALL PART OF CHANNEL—Some parts of the conduit or tunnel are only large enough to admit a man crawling through. The party who first discovered the channel almost despaired of getting through at all, but persistence brought them safely to the other end, which they found to be the pool of Siloam.

LARGER PART—Other parts are spacious chambers, which it is believed housed many Jews in the days of the Roman persecution. Just why the size is of such irregular proportions we do not know, but it is supposed that the larger part was necessary to take out the loosened rocks.

LARGER PART

WHERE THE WORKMEN MET

WHERE THE WORKMEN MET—The course of the tunnel is in the form of an irregular S. The workmen began at each end and working toward each other, met about midway at this point; so states an inscription on the walls of the tunnel here.

THE SILOAM INSCRIPTION—This is the inscription which narrates the story. The remarkable part of it is, how, without modern engineering instruments they ever calculated so accurately, for the tunnel wound around the little valleys and hills until it reached the pool inside the old city walls. Siloam is not, therefore, a spring but a pool, which is fed from the "Virgin's Spring" by means of the underground channel just described, and still operates just as it did originally in the days of Hezekiah, King of Judah.

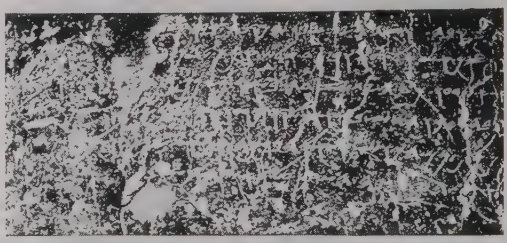


PLATE VII.

THE "SILOAM INSCRIPTION."—About B. C. 700.

[illegible] character, was cut on the wall of the conduit of the Pool of Siloam.

THE SILOAM INSCRIPTION

KING'S GARDEN

KING'S GARDEN—The outlet of Siloam is just below, where the water is used to irrigate the "King's gardens" and to this day it is the most productive garden about the Holy City. The garden was first mentioned by Solomon, and we can be sure his tables were often spread with the produce of this little field.

JERUSALEM—SOUTH SIDE—The present walls are on the brink of the hill, but once they extended south from the temple enclosure and took in the hillside rather than the hilltop as in this day.

JERUSALEM—SOUTH SIDE

JERUSALEM—All the north part of the city was on the outside of the walls, until the

JERUSALEM

time of Christ or possibly later.

MOUNT ZION—Hezekiah died at the age of fifty-four, having ruled Judah for twenty-nine years (2 Chron. 29: 1-2). His national problems were difficult of solution, but by the wise counsel of Isaiah the prophet, he was enabled to do honor to his country and is chronicled as one of the great kings of Jerusalem. "He was buried in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David, and the people of Jerusalem did him honor at his death." 2 Chron. 32: 33.

MOUNT ZION

DEFEAT OF MANASSEH—The longest reign of any Jewish king was that of Manasseh, son of Hezekiah (fifty-five years). But

MANASSEH'S IDOL

strange to say he was just the opposite of his father in matters of both state and religion. He promoted idolatry and fairly courted war with Assyria, who was not slow to step into the arena.

DEFEAT OF MANASSEH

MANASSEH'S IDOL—Again he compels us to stand in the valley of Hinnom, where he revived the god of the Ammonites—Moloch—and like the heartless Ahaz, sacrificed his own children by burning them alive in the fire god of Gehenna. 2 Chron. 33: 6.

ARREST OF MANASSEH

ARREST OF MANASSEH—The anger of the Lord was kindled against Manasseh and the Assyrians were permitted

REFORMATION OF MANASSEH

to seize him. He was tortured by them and they bound him in fetters and carried him to Babylon, where he was incarcerated for some time. 2 Chron. 33: 11.

REFORMATION OF MANASSEH—Manasseh became very humble, and from his future actions was truly pentitent. He gave himself to constant and earnest prayer, whereupon he was brought back to Jerusalem and returned to his throne. Manasseh verified his sincerity by destroying the idols he had made and restoring the temple worship to the place it had in his father's day. 2 Chron. 33: 12-17.

TOWER ANTONIA—The reign of Amon, son of Manasseh, was fortunately of only two years duration. It was uneventful, particularly as to state affairs. He was slain by a servant and was succeeded by Josiah, his son, who became the

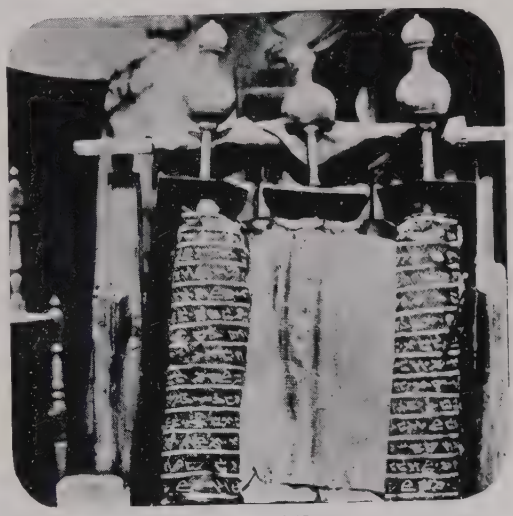
TOWER ANTONIA

REPAIRING THE TEMPLE

prince of reformers. Josiah reigned thirty-one years, and restored the religious system more nearly to comply with the Law of Moses than it had been at any time. 2 Kings 21: 19-26.

Repairing the Temple—The temple was badly in need of repairs, and Josiah gave it his first attention. His high priest Hilkiah employed laborers whom he paid in silver gathered by free will offerings, and the work progressed rapidly. 2 Kings 22: 3-7.

The Book—While prosecuting the work, Hilkiah found a book (which is believed to have been the Pentateuch or at least Deuteronomy) among the ruins which were being restored. He at once took it to the king, who, at sight of it, was overcome with interest. 2 Kings 22: 8-9.



THE BOOK

Shaphan Reads the Book—Shaphan the scribe was requested to read the book to the king, who discovered that it was the "Book of the Law." Josiah was so happy that he rent his clothes. He asked the Lord's guidance concerning the book and what his duty regarding it should be. 2 Kings 22: 10-13.

Huldah—The scribes sought Huldah, a prophetess, who predicted that though Judah's destruction was

SHAPHAN READS THE BOOK

sure to come in the near future, yet if Josiah would direct his religious policy, consistent with the words of the book, that this desolation would not come in his day, and "that he would be brought to his grave in peace." 2 Kings 22: 14-20.

Josiah Destroys the Idols—Josiah then read the book to the people, who said, Amen. Then a wholesale and complete destruction was visited upon all idols of every kind. They were piled in the Kidron valley and burned, and the ashes were carried to Bethel, where Jeroboam once set up a golden calf. 2 Kings 23: 1.

JOSIAH DESTROYS THE IDOLS

Jewish Cemetery—He dug up the bones from the Jewish Cemetery on the side of Olivet and burned them

HULDAH

where heathen idols once stood, which according to the eastern beliefs, desecrated the place forever.

JEWISH CEMETERY

HILL OF OFFENSE—At this time the heathen temples and houses of Solomon's foreign wives stood on the Mount of Olives. These were all totally destroyed by Josiah and dead men's bones were strewn all over the hill. 2 Kings 23: 13-14.

HILL OF OFFENSE

TOPHETH—Josiah particularly mentions that he destroyed Topheth, where the god Moloch stood, and defiled the valley of Hin-

TOPHETH

nom and the barbarous worship of the hideous god was never revived again. 2 Kings 23: 10.

MAP—Necho of Egypt had now started with his army to invade Assyria. As he passed through Judah, Josiah pursued him as far north as Megiddo. Necho turned upon him, and as Josiah's troops became scattered the king himself was slain. He was brought back to Jerusalem in a chariot and buried in his own sepulchre. 2 Kings 23: 29-30.

STREET IN JERUSALEM—Necho's

MAP

CAPTURE OF JEHOAHAZ

assault upon the Assyrians failed; and when the Egyptian returned to Jerusalem he seized Jehoahaz (Josiah's son who was king), and replaced him by another son of Josiah, Eliakim, whose name was changed to Jehoiakim, and Necho obtained a heavy tribute. 2 Kings 23: 33-35.

STREET IN JERUSALEM

Capture of Jehoahaz—It was only three months after Jehoahaz was crowned king that he was driven a captive before Pharaoh—Necho's army into Egypt. Josiah had left a cleansed religion as a heritage for his son and now within three months after his death Jehoahaz had forsaken it all and re-established idolatry.

MAP

No prophet is necessary to predict that the end of Judah is nigh at hand, even at her door. 2 Kings 23: 33.

MAP—Events in the East at this time (606 B. C.) were changing rapidly. Babylon subdued Assyria and suddenly became the great power. Nebuchadnezzar, the crown prince, having a score to settle with Necho, advanced into Egypt, and Judah, who had heretofore paid tribute to Egypt, is now compelled to make payments to the Babylonian government.

FIRST CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH

FIRST CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH—Jehoiachin ascended the throne of Judah and dared to defy Babylon by refusing further payments of tribute, whereupon Nebuchadnezzar took the Holy City, and carried some ten thousand prisoners to Babylon. Among them was Ezekiel and the king himself, who served in prison for many years. 2 Kings 24: 8-16.

QUESTIONS

Who was king of Judah when Samaria fell? Was Hezekiah a reform king? What did Sennacherib do to Judah? How did Hezekiah pay the tribute exacted? What did the Assyrians then demand? Did Hezekiah surrender? What did the prophet Isaiah have to do with it? What happened to the Assyrian army? Describe the death of Sennacherib? Where? Who did

Isaiah predict would conquer Assyria? Who then should Hezekiah fear? What precautions did he follow? Is there a pool of Hezekiah to-day? From where did he bring water into the lower city? Is the aqueduct still existing? With what pool does it connect? Was Hezekiah's rule a success? Who reigned longer than any Jewish king? Length of rule? In what religion did Manasseh indulge? By whom was he taken prisoner? Did he repent? Was his repentance sincere? What proof? Who was the real reform king? Tell about finding a book? What was the book? How did it affect Josiah? What prophetess advised Josiah? After reading the book what did Josiah do with all idols? How did he defile places of heathen worship? What did he do to the heathen temples on Olivet? What did he do to Moloch? How did Josiah meet his death? Where? By whom? Who took Johoahaz to Egypt? Into whose hands had Assyria fallen? Who was head of the Babylonian army? To where did Nebuchadnezzar now turn his attention? To whom does Judah now pay tribute? What Judean king refuses this tribute? What happened to Jehoiachin? How many prisoners were taken with him? What great prophet was among the captives? What treatment did Jehoiachin receive?

THE FALL OF JERUSALEM

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER XXX

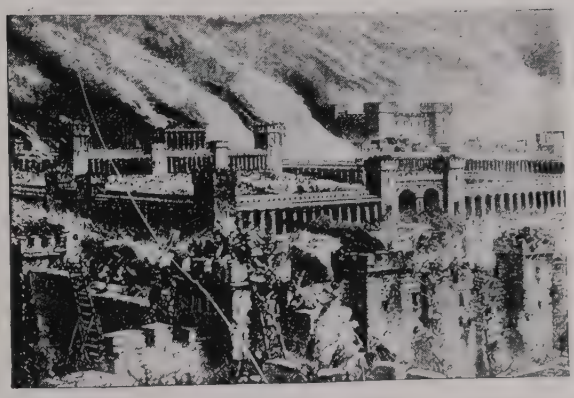
Hezekiah came to the throne of Judah mid stormy days. Assyria had taken Samaria and Ahaz obligated himself to a heavy tribute, which compelled Hezekiah to tear the gold from the temple doors to pay. Isaiah persuaded the king not to pay any more and predicted that Assyria would soon be swallowed up by Babylon. Hezekiah fortified Jerusalem and brought into it an abundance of water to be used in case of a siege. Manasseh succeeded Hezekiah and proved to be a worse king than Ahaz. Josiah was the real reformer. He completely destroyed all idols and desecrated all places of idol worship. He met his death in battle with the Egyptian Necho at Megiddo. His son Jehoahaz was carried into Egypt three months later, and Jehoiakim placed in his stead. He was king eleven years and was succeeded by Jehoiachin, who flatly refused to pay tribute to Babylon, and three months later was carried away by Nebuchadnezzar to the banks of the Euphrates, together with a large number of the best people of Jerusalem.

DANIEL'S PRAYER

Nast

FALL OF JERUSALEM

Chapter XXX
THE FALL OF JERUSALEM
2 Kings 25—Daniel 1-6



JERUSALEM

Jerusalem — Zedekiah, uncle of Jehoiachin, was then appointed king of Judah by Babylon. Zedekiah attempted to follow the policy of Jehoiachin and immediately Jerusalem was besieged. Starvation and terror reigned inside the walls. It is said that men and women fed upon their children.

Fall of Jerusalem — The walls were breached by the battering rams of Nebuchadnezzar, and after a siege of many months, in the dead of night, the Babylonian army marched into the city. 2 Kings 25: 1-3.

WALL—EAST SIDE

Wall—East Side—The Judean army with the king escaped through a secret

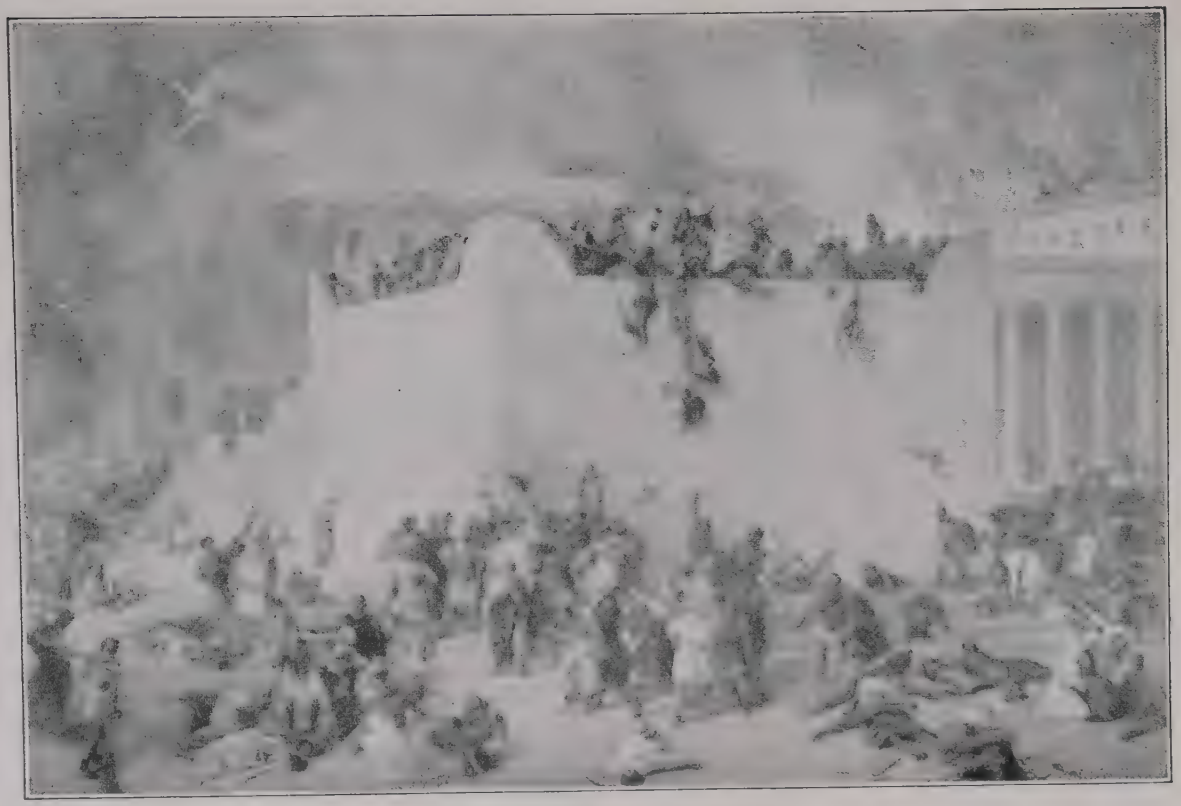
RIBLAH

and unprotected passage of the wall, and reached the wilderness of Judea, as David had done before Absalom. 2 Kings 25: 4.

RIBLAH—Zedekiah's army became scattered, and the Babylonians pursued the king to the plains of Jordan, where he was captured and taken to Riblah, the headquarters of Nebuchadnezzar. 2 Kings 25: 5-6.

MURDER OF SONS OF ZEDEKIAH—Zedekiah was carried in chains to Babylon. But before they started with him, he was compelled to stand by and see his sons murdered, and then

MURDER OF SONS OF ZEDEKIAH



DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

after witnessing this atrocity his own eyes were put out by the enemy (verse 7).

Destruction of Jerusalem—A month later Nebuchadnezzer came to Jerusalem and totally demolished it—temple, houses, and walls. Every portable thing was taken away, even the brass pillars and molten sea were broken to pieces and carried as junk to Babylon. 2 Kings 25: 8-17.

Natives Carried to Babylon—All the better class of people were taken to Babylon. The chief priest and his attendants were put to death. But Jeremiah, the great prophet, at that time in prison, was released by the captain of the guard and was given his choice either to go of his own volition or remain in Judah. He chose to remain, for only the poor and afflicted were left in the razed land as vine dressers and husbandmen, and he was doubtless necessary to them in their misery and dejection.

NATIVES CARRIED TO BABYLON

Mizpah—Jerusalem having been razed to the ground, the capital was moved to Mizpah (four miles north) and one Gedaliah was appointed governor by the Babylonian government. Immediately the Trans-Jordanian peoples came apparently to congratulate Gedaliah, but one Ish-

MIZPAH

mael sprang upon the new officer and slew him, hoping thereby to take charge of Judah himself. 2 Kings 25: 22-27.

MAP—The Jews, fearing that they would be accused of the murder, fled into Egypt, and forced Jeremiah to go with them. Except for some traditional stories, they are never heard of again and it is presumed that Jeremiah died in the land of Pharaoh, for which he had never had any love.

ANATHOTH—The story of the last days of Judah would not be complete without an outline of the life of Jeremiah, "who from being of no account as a prophet, came to be considered the greatest of them all, and was spoken of as

MAP

Lieber

JEREMIAH

'the prophet.'" (John 1:21). He was born at Anathoth, five miles northwest of Jerusalem.

ANATHOTH

JEREMIAH—He was active during the reform of Josiah. He was a plain spoken prophet. He loved the temple but did not deify it. He loved the people but did not hesitate to predict their fate and to warn them of the danger of their misconduct.

JEREMIAH'S GROTTO—It is said that Jeremiah resided in a cliff just outside the present north wall of Jerusalem, and here most of his writing was done. Whether he chose this cave as his home or used it as a hiding place we do not know, but to this day it is called "Jeremiah's Grotto."

JEREMIAH'S GROTTO

THE KING DESTROYS JEREMIAH'S WRITINGS

THE KING DESTROYS JEREMIAH'S WRITINGS—Jeremiah had predicted the capture of Jehoiachin and that he would never return. His book of scathing denunciations was read to Jehoiachin, whereupon the king had it cut to pieces and burned to ashes, and the prophet cast into prison, the latter thing having occurred many times before.

BARUCH—Baruch, the faithful scribe, read and wrote for Jeremiah and accompanied him at all times.

BARUCH THE SCRIBE—Baruch became quite a teacher on his own account and often read to the people, and exhorted them with almost as much eloquence as the prophet himself, and was held in highest esteem by Judah.

BARUCH THE SCRIBE

Dore

BARUCH

JEREMIAH AT MIZPAH

JERUSALEM PRISON

JERUSALEM PRISON—Zedekiah's alliance with Egypt had been denounced by Jeremiah (and Ezekiel as well), and during the siege he often begged the king to surrender. But the populace arose against him and had him arrested, putting him first in prison, then in a dungeon, and finally in a well, from which Zedekiah delivered him.

JEREMIAH AT MIZPAH—His fame and teaching spread everywhere, and even Nebuchadnezzar favored him and gave the prophet his choice either to go or remain. He chose to remain with the poor and was appointed advisor to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and continued his work until the murder of the governor.

SCENE IN EGYPT

SCENE IN EGYPT—Then, as previously seen, he

was forced by his friends to accompany them in their flight to Egypt where he is lost to us forever. But a prophet like Jeremiah will never be forgotten. Men of high ideals and the courage of their convictions live on.

Ezekiel the Prophet—Ezekiel, also a great and outstanding prophet, fortunately was taken to Babylon. Jeremiah had created a conscience and begotten hope in many who had been captured, as well as in those who remained, and Ezekiel continued this work in Babylon. So the Jews there, though separated from Jerusalem, continued to look forward to a better day and a time when they should return to the Holy Land and the sacred precincts of God's house.

EZEKIEL THE PROPHET

The Star of Hope—In his famous vision of the "Valley of Dry Bones," Ezekiel foretells the revival of the nation and the restoration of the Holy City with its glorious temple, which, now that it has been destroyed and they cut off from its privileges, is more revered than ever. This vision was to Israel a star of hope which stood high upon the western horizon.

Zmurko

THE STAR OF HOPE

Martin

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON

Group of Jews—It does not appear that the exiled Jews were harshly dealt with. It seems that they had considerable liberty, lived in their own homes, had servants, and engaged in business. Jeremiah had urged them to be content in their exile. Some took part in matters of state, and even Jehoiachin was finally released from prison. Some, of course, who did not comply with national regulations, were handled as perhaps any native who might have disobeyed the king's orders.

GROUP OF JEWS

By the Rivers of Babylon—But they were in a strange land, separated from the Holy Temple and the things they loved most. They were heartbroken. When the Babylonians asked them to sing one of their songs of Zion, they refused. They hung their harps on the willows by the rivers of Babylon and refused to sing. They cried: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I remember thee not; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." (Psalm 137).

Tablet, Recently Unearthed—Of what happened during their years in Babylon little is known, but the stories of Daniel and Esther give us some excellent

glimpses, and may serve as an index to a part of it.

This picture is taken from a carving unearthed in Babylon and represents the timid approach of the Jewish captives to the authorities of that country. Whatever liberties they may have enjoyed, they were constantly scrutinized and compelled to walk in strictest accordance with the laws of the land of their exile.

TABLET, RECENTLY UNEARTHED

CHART OF BABYLON—Babylon was located on both sides of the Euphrates, and was surrounded by walls aggregating more than fifty miles in circumference. They are said to have been eighty-five feet thick and in places over three hundred feet high, and the city had more than one hundred gates of brass. The places shown outside the walls were palaces, public buildings and libraries, particularly Birs-Nemroud to the southwest. At the place marked Kasr the palace of Nebuchadnezzar was located, and at Mujelibe was the great temple where a mound nearly one hundred feet high still remains, and extensive excavations are being made at this time.

Martin

BABYLON IN HER GLORY

Babylon in Her Glory—Babylon was the greatest city of ancient times and its famous hanging garden was one of the "Seven wonders of the world." The city is first mentioned in Gen. 11: 1-9, in connection with the attempted building of a tower that should reach up to heaven. God rebuked such ambitions by the confusion of tongues and from this occurrence we have the name of the city of Babylon, the Hebrew of which is Babel. In the course of its existence the city was greatly enriched by plunder from every country of the ancient world. The picture is the artist's conception of the great Babylon in the day of Nebuchadnezzar and as the captive Jews saw it.

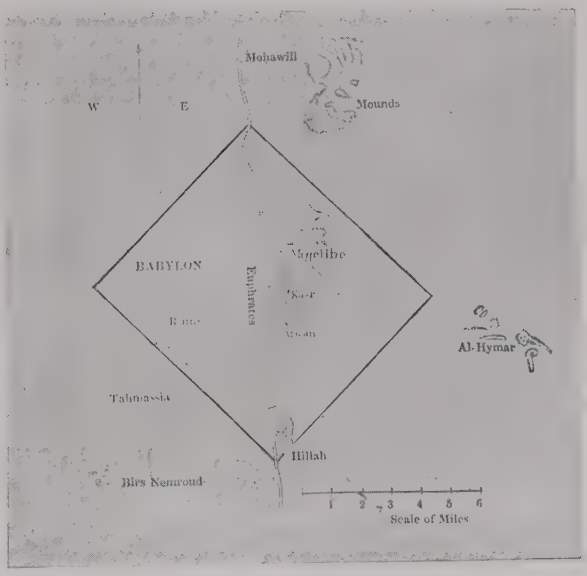
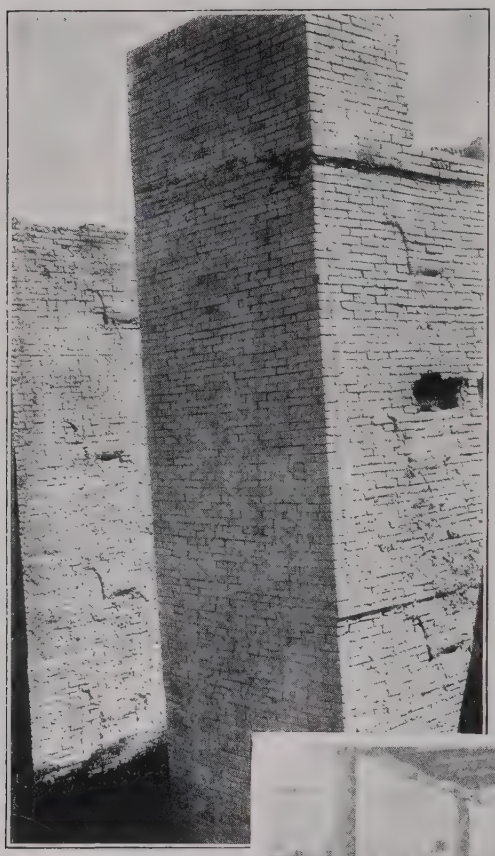


CHART OF BABYLON

The most perfectly preserved relic of Babylon's former splendor is this tower, 39 feet high as it stands to-day, called Isthar. The surface was adorned with bulls and dragons in relief, once beautifully enameled in white and yellow on a bright blue background. It must have been much higher originally



since it was evidently a tower at one of the eastern gates in the days when Babylon was in her glory.

Site of Babylon—But Babylon is no more. Whereas, once this Euphrates witnessed a teeming population of merry-makers whose revelry in this day would rival night life on Broadway, it is now a scene of desolation. Except for the archæologist it would have no visitors to-day, and even to him the half-savage

SITE OF BABYLON

THE CAPTURED JEWS

natives make life a burden.

BIRS-NEMROUD

BIRS-NEMROUD—This is Birs-Nemroud where the most interesting finds have been made. Those mounds were once covered with great buildings, one of which, it is certain, was the library. No great city in history has been so completely swept into oblivion as Babylon.

THE CAPTURED JEWS—It was when Babylon was at the zenith of her glory that the captive Jews from Jerusalem were brought in. They were weary and dejected from the thousand-mile trip and must have appeared much as the artist suggests here. Among them were Ezekiel, Daniel, and other notables from the Holy City, shining examples for any age.

DANIEL

DANIEL–Daniel was a young man of noble ancestry and highly favored physically and intellectually. Moreover, he was

deeply devoted to his religion and greatly concerned about setting the right example. One of the first problems he had to face in Babylon was: What course shall I pursue if called upon to act contrary to God's will? How shall I advise my people?

Four Prominent Captives—Very soon the king wished a number of his most likely captives to take a certain three-year course of study, and among this class were Daniel and his three companions, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. During this time food was served that the Jews considered improper to eat and these four youths refused to partake of it. But they thrived so well on their diet of pulse and water that the keeper did not report them. Dan. 1.

FOUR PROMINENT CAPTIVES

Daniel the Interpreter—Charms, sorcery, and dreams entered materially into the religion of the Babylonians. Once when Nebuchadnezzar had a disturbing dream he called in his interpreters, but they

failed to interpret it. But when Daniel was called he not only interpreted the forgotten dream, but first told the king what it was. Though the interpretation predicted the overthrow of his kingdom, Nebuchadnezzar was so impressed that he was ready to worship Daniel. He made him an officer of highest rank, and gave his three companions splendid positions also. Dan. 2.

DANIEL THE INTERPRETER

The Golden Image—In the meantime, Nebuchadnezzar had made a great golden image, and demanded that every subject, regardless of race or religion, should fall down and worship it under the penalty of being cast into a fiery furnace. But

THE GOLDEN IMAGE

in spite of this terrible prospect Daniel's three friends refused to worship the image. Dan. 3: 1-12.

THE FIERY FURNACE—When the king was apprized of the fact he was furious, but he gave them another chance, and when they refused to obey this time, he had them committed to the flames. But it was with reluctance and foreboding that he did so, for his oath must stand, right or wrong. Dan. 3: 13-23.

ONE LIKE UNTO THE SON OF GOD

ONE LIKE UNTO THE SON OF GOD—Early the next morning the king arose and when he found that the three Jews had been preserved, and that there was a fourth person, one like unto a son of the gods, he gave them their freedom and demanded that no disparaging word should ever be said regarding the Hebrews' God. Then the three were again promoted. Dan. 3: 24-30.

DANIEL AND NEBUCHADNEZZAR—Nebuchadnezzar had another dream and again Daniel was summoned. The king, more troubled this time than before, told the dream to the young prophet in the presence of the

Dore

THE FIERY FURNACE

Rochegrosse

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S FATE

"great men" of the kingdom. Dan. 4: 1-18.

THE FINAL MESSAGE—Daniel was speechless for a while as he gave careful thought to the dream, and then finally he gave the interpretation. A terrible thing was to happen to the great monarch, and Daniel was bold enough to recommend the course the king should pursue. Dan. 4: 19-27.

DANIEL AND NEBUCHADNEZZAR

THE FINAL MESSAGE

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S FATE—The kingdom did

indeed depart from Nebuchadnezzar. He seems to have suffered "with acute mania, which in its extreme forms, exhibits all kinds of degraded habits. . . . The patient often is more like a wild animal than a human being. These extreme symptoms are seen most frequently in cases which recover." Dan. 4: 28-37.

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST—During the reign of Belshazzar, a great feast was given to a thousand of his lords and members of his own house. Up to this time it appears that they had never desecrated the vessels of gold which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, but during this drunken carousal Belshazzar had them brought out and served wine in them to the women who were in attendance. Dan. 5: 1-4.

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST

MYSTERIOUS HANDWRITING—As they drank from the holy vessels, their "toasts" were to the gods of Babylon. But at that moment consternation seized them. Great blazing letters appeared upon the wall of the banquet hall and the hilarious feasters were frightened sober. The astrologers and soothsayers were brought in, but they were not able to read the words nor interpret their meaning. Dan. 5: 5-10.

DANIEL INTERPRETS THE WRITING—The queen had remembered Daniel the Jew, and recommended that the king send for him at once. This was done and

MYSTERIOUS HANDWRITING

DANIEL INTERPRETS THE WRITING

Daniel promptly read the writing and gave its meaning. Viz.: (1) "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it." (2) "Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting." (3) "Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." Dan. 5: 1-28.

FALL OF BABYLON — Daniel was immediately restored to high position, but this did not stay the king's doom. The city was even then surrounded by hordes of the Medes and Persians led by Cyrus. The mutinous Babylonians threw open the hundred gates of brass, and the greatest city in the world was taken with little

FALL OF BABYLON

DANIEL PROMOTED

effort, and Belshazzar was slain. Dan. 5: 30.

DANIEL PROMOTED—Darius is said to have taken the throne (Dan. 6: 1). When he reorganized the kingdom, Daniel became his chief counsel and was given the highest position in the new government. Dan. 6: 3.

DANIEL, MAN OF PRAYER—This action naturally displeased the native members of the king's cabinet, since Daniel was a foreigner. But

DANIEL, MAN OF PRAYER

DANIEL COMMITTED TO LIONS

in his promotion Daniel never forgot the Holy City and the poor in Palestine, and three times each day he prayed with his window open toward Jerusalem. This gave his jealous enemies an idea as to how they might dispose of the successful Jew, and they were not slow to carry it out. Dan. 6: 4-11.

Death Decree of the King—The king was persuaded to sign and seal a document which provided "that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days save of thee, O King, he shall be cast into a den of lions." This of course would catch Daniel. Dan. 6: 12-15.

DEATH DECREE OF THE KING

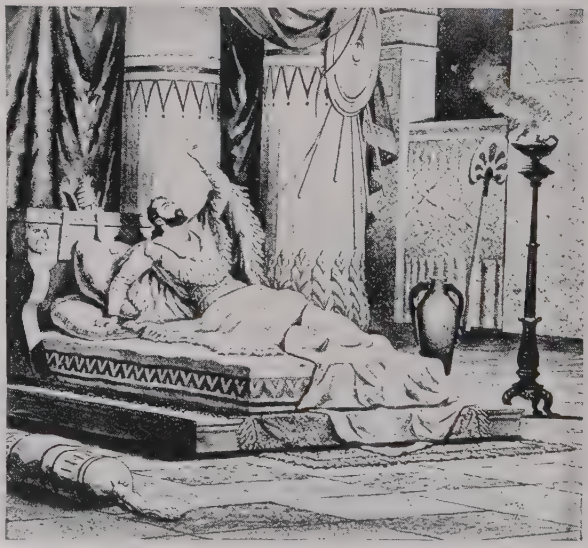
Daniel Committed to Lions—But it did not affect the program of the man of God. He continued to pray daily as he had been wont to do, and this was the thing his enemies had been watching for. Caught in the very act of violating the king's orders, he was arrested, convicted and cast into the den of lions.

The Angel's Visit—God sent his angel to protect Daniel (verse 22) and no harm came to him. How often have we been thus protected against the wild beasts

THE ANGEL'S VISIT

that infest our environment? Our chief fight is not against flesh and blood.

A SLEEPLESS NIGHT—The king suffered more that night than his prisoner. "He went to his palace and passed the night fasting; neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep fled from him." He not only felt that he was punishing an innocent man but that he had fallen a prey to jealous tricksters at the very outset of his ascension to the throne of Babylon. Dan. 6: 18.



A SLEEPLESS NIGHT

THE VOICE OF THE KING—Very early the next morning the

king came to the lion's cave seeking Daniel, for he felt certain from what he had already heard of this extraordinary man, that he still lived. Coming near to the den he cried: "O thou servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou servest continually able to deliver thee from the lions?" Dan. 6: 19-20.

THE VOICE OF THE KING

THEY HAVE NOT HURT ME—"Then said Daniel unto the king, O king live forever. My God hath sent his angel and hath shut the lions' mouths that they have not hurt me, for as much as before him innocency was found in me, and also before thee, O king have I done no hurt." And Daniel was set at liberty. Dan. 6: 21-22.

MICHELANGELO'S DANIEL — Daniel became a great prophet and lived to be a very old man. He prospered far into the reign of Cyrus, and must have seen this good king

THEY HAVE NOT HURT ME

restore the golden vessels to his brethren, to be taken back to Jerusalem by the happy multitude who returned after being in captivity seventy years.

MICHELANGELO'S DANIEL

Questions

Who was appointed king in Jehoiachin's stead? Who appointed Zedekiah? Did Zedekiah pay tribute to Babylon? What followed? Who led the Babylonian army? Was the siege a long one? To where did Zedekiah flee? How did they afflict him? What was done to his sons? Where was Zedekiah then taken? What was the fate of Jerusalem thirty days later? How many Jews were taken prisoners? What great prophet remained? Who was Gedaliah? What became of him? Where did Jeremiah go? What do we know of him in Egypt? Speak of the treatment of the Jews in Babylon. Why do we know they were not happy? Where is Babylon? How far and what direction from Jerusalem? What can you say of the ruins of Babylon? What young prophet is in Babylon? For what did the king educate him? What did Daniel refuse to do? Tell about the golden image? Did the Jews worship it? What was the penalty? What followed? Who interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream? What was its mean-

ing? Did it come to pass as Daniel had said? Describe Belshazzar's feast? Did they use the vessels from the temple? What happened then? Who read the writing on the wall? What did it say? Did it soon come to pass? Who captured Babylon? Speak of the details. What was the fate of Belshazzar? Who took the throne of Babylon? What was Daniel's position? What was the conspiracy against Daniel? Did he continue at daily prayer? Why was he reported to the king? What was done with Daniel? Did the lions devour him? Why? What did the king do? What of Daniel's future?

RETURN FROM EXILE

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER XXXI

After the deportation of Jehoiachin, Zedekiah his uncle was appointed ruler at Jerusalem, but when he finally (after eleven years) refused to pay, Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city, took Zedekiah blinded to Babylon, and a month after its capitulation, totally destroyed the Holy City. All except the poorer Jews were taken captive, and a picture of their life among a strange people is seen in the book of Daniel. After fifty years, Babylon was taken by the Medes and Persians under Cyrus and the Jews were permitted to return to Jerusalem. Fifty thousand returned then and many more later, the details of which follow in the latter part of this chapter.

Von Siemiradski

IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM

Chapter XXXI

RETURN FROM EXILE

Ezra—Nehemiah—Esther

MAP

Map—More than two hundred miles southeast of Babylon is Shushan, the Persian capital. It was a fair second to Babylon, especially since Nineveh had been destroyed, and after Cyrus took Babylon the king divided his time between these two cities.

RUINS OF SHUSHAN

Ruins of Shushan—But the main palace was at Shushan and all records were kept there. The king still resided at Shushan in most part and it might be

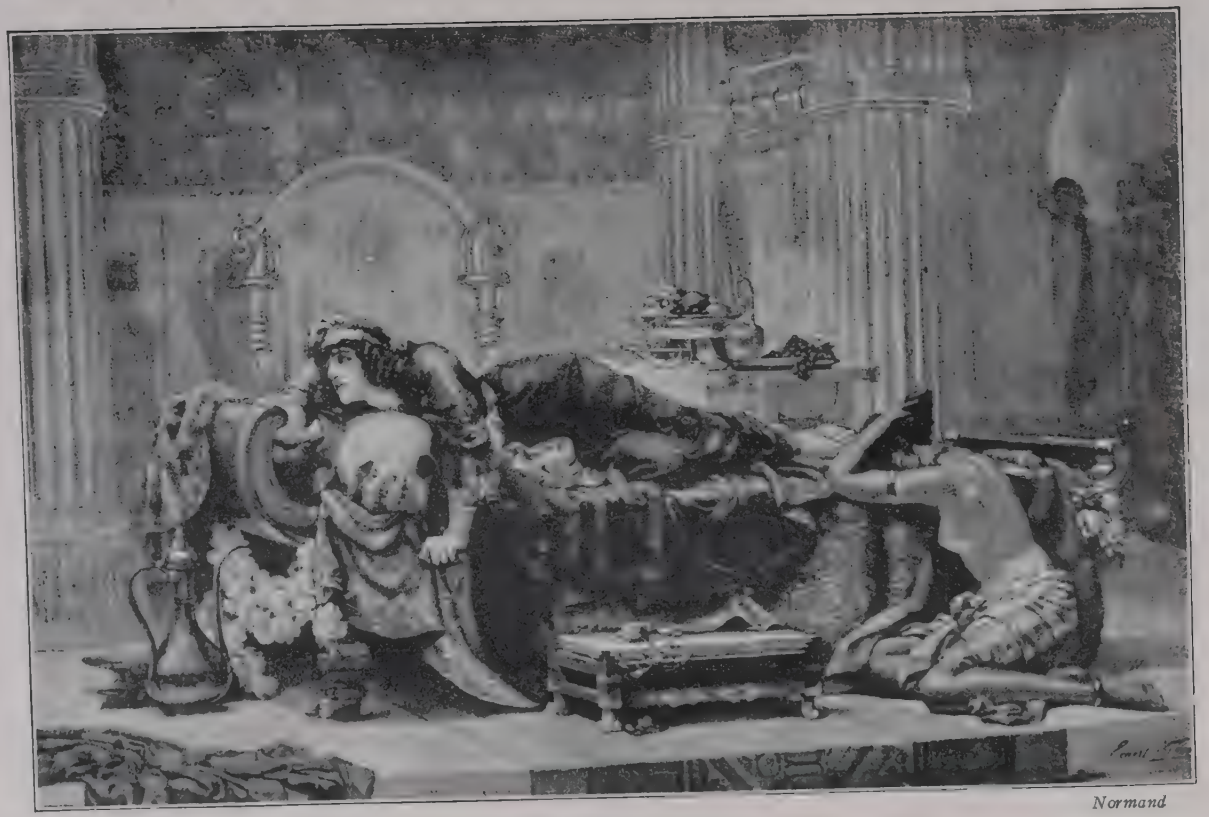
RUINS OF XERXES PALACE

said that it was the real capital, even though Babylon was the greater city. Here we have the ruins of Shushan, or Susa as it is called today.

Ruins of Xerxes' Palace—About fifty years after Cyrus took Babylon the royal palace of Persia was occupied by Ahasuerus (Xerxes). This king called his lords from the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces for a great meeting at the capital, "to show them the riches of his glorious kingdom." Esth. 1:1-4.

THE FEAST

The Feast—At the end



Normand

THE QUEEN DISOBEYS

of one hundred and eighty days the king made a great feast for his lords and princes and wine flowed freely. The queen, Vashti, also made a great feast for the royal women (probably the wives of the lords) at the same time, at her palace. Esth. 1: 5-9.

APPLICANT FOR QUEEN

THE QUEEN DISOBEYS—After seven days "the king's heart being merry with wine," he demanded the queen to appear to "show the lords her beauty." But the queen, for some good reason, flatly refused to come and the king became very angry. Esth. 1: 10-12.

APPLICANT FOR QUEEN—Xerxes then divorced Vashti, and advertised throughout his domains for beautiful maidens to visit Shushan that from among them he

ESTHER CROWNED

might select another queen. Each applicant spent a year preparing herself to meet the king and they appeared before him one at a time. Esth. 2: 1-14.

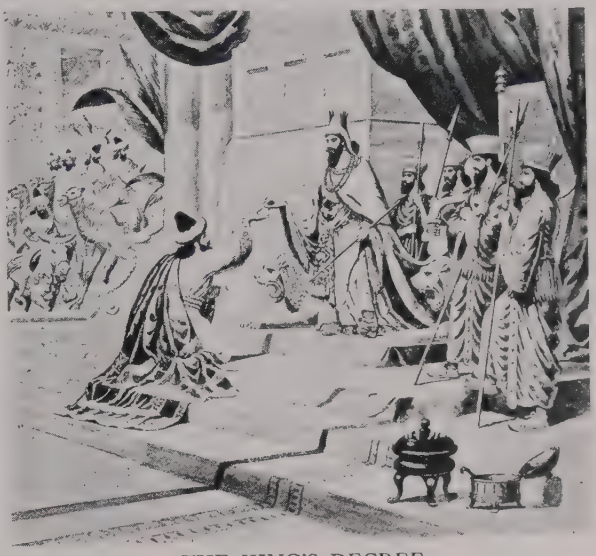
ESTHER CROWNED—Esther, a Jewess, was entered as applicant by her uncle, Mordecai, who had brought her up from childhood (she was an orphan), and when she was presented to the king "he set the royal crown upon her head and she became queen, and Ahasuerus loved Esther above all women." Esth. 2: 15-20.

MURDER PLOTTERS

MURDER PLOTTERS — Mordecai, one day, was seated in the king's gate and overheard two of the servants of the royal palace planning the murder of the king. Mordecai informed his niece and she warned her husband. The plotters were executed immediately, and the uncle was promoted, but no demonstration was made for him. Esth. 2: 21-23.

THE KING'S DECREE—One Haman had a grievance against Mordecai, and when he found that he was a Jew he began to plot against him. He informed the

king that there was a certain class of people who were openly opposed to the monarch, and that he wished permission to put them to death. Xerxes gave Haman his consent in writing, but he had not been informed that it was the Jews about whom Haman had made complaint. Esth. 3.



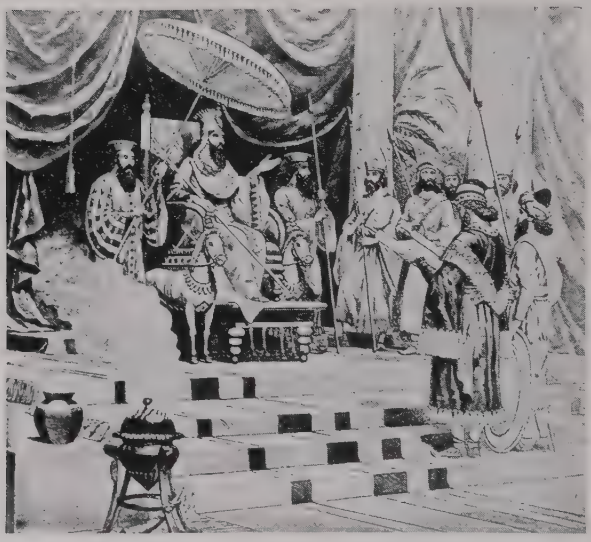
THE KING'S DECREE

THE CONDEMNATION

THE CONDEMNATION—The decree was sent to all parts of the kingdom, and the out-

raged Jews were greatly distressed. There was great mourning and fasting. Many lay in sackcloth and ashes and refused to be comforted since it was the will of the king that they should die. Esth. 4: 1-4.

ESTHER BEFORE XERXES—Esther got knowledge of the cunningly devised scheme to kill all the Jews (which would include her uncle and herself) and she at once decided to go to the king. One was liable to the death penalty to appear before the ruler without being invited, but she reasoned, "If I perish, I perish, and went." Fortunately, however, the king held out his golden sceptre, which was a sign that she had obtained his favor. Then she made her request, "Would the king bring Haman and dine in her palace." The king promised, and Haman was invited. Esth. 5.



HAMAN BEFORE THE KING

HAMAN BEFORE THE KING—In the meantime, Ahasuerus remembers that he had not honored Mordecai, who had saved his life. The king asked Haman what he should do to honor a man in whom he delighted.

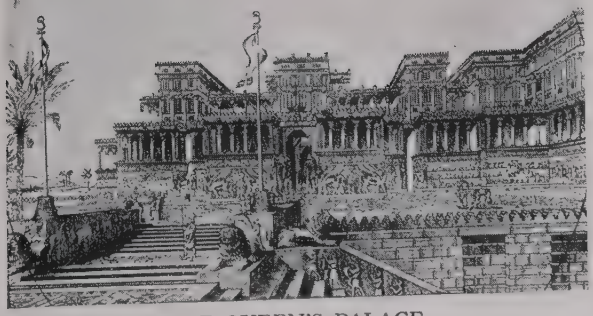
Dore

ESTHER BEFORE XERXES

MORDECAI HONORED

Haman, thinking the king had him in mind, said, "I would put the royal crown on his head and mount him on the king's horse, which should be led by thy most noble prince and let the prince cry: This is the man whom the king delighteth to honor." Esth. 6: 1-9.

MORDECAI HONORED—"Then the king said to Haman, make haste, take the apparel and the horse as thou hast said and do even so to Mordecai the Jew. Let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken."



THE QUEEN'S PALACE

THE QUEEN'S PALACE—Haman did as he was directed but he was disappointed and humiliated at this unexpected turn of events. He had already built a scaffold seventy-five feet high upon which he expected to hang Mordecai the next day. Of this the king was not aware, nor that it was the Jews that Haman had in mind to exterminate. Esth. 6: 10-14.

THE ACCUSATION BY ESTHER—While Ahasuerus and Haman were dining with the queen, Esther said to the king, "Spare my life, for I and my people are sold to be destroyed, to be slain and to perish." The king was extremely surprised, and asked, "Who is he? Where is he that durst presume in his heart to do this?" "And Esther answered, the adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman." The king was so taken back by this betrayal of confidence upon the part of Haman that he left the room to collect his thoughts. Esth. 7: 1-8.

THE ACCUSATION BY ESTHER

HAMAN'S DEATH—Upon his return he cried to the servants: "Hang him on the gallows that he prepared for Mordecai." "Then was the king's wrath pacified." And they laid hands on Haman and hanged him on the same day that he had intended hanging Mordecai. Esth. 7: 9-10.

REVENGE—After this it was left to the Jews to settle

Armitage

HAMAN'S DEATH

the matter with Haman's associates in this wicked scheme, and his ten sons were hanged upon the gallows where their father had been executed the day before.

REVENGE

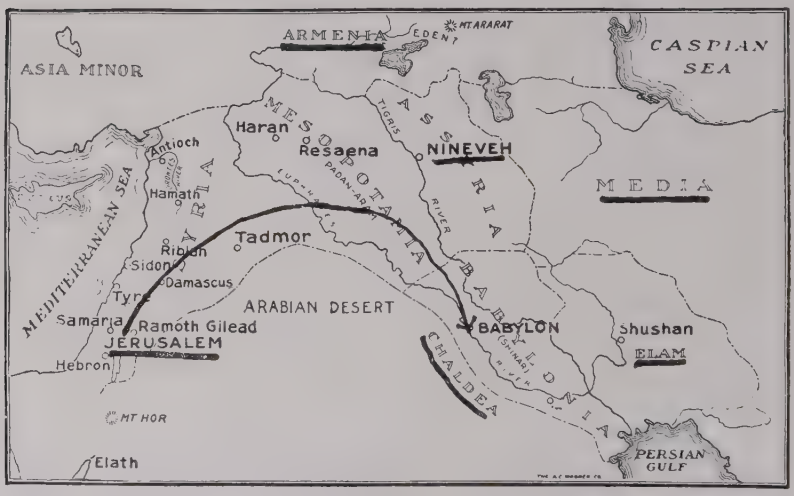
Modern Oriental Jews—The magnitude of this scheme of Haman's was greater than at first it might appear. Practically all Jews were subjects of Persia, and if his huge plot had not miscarried it would have meant the extermination of the Jew from the earth. Esther no doubt realized this and was the more willing to risk her life.

MODERN ORIENTAL JEWS

QUEEN ESTHER'S TOMB

QUEEN ESTHER'S TOMB — The sacred story tells us no more of the noble queen Esther, but tradition states that she was popular and loved by her subjects. She died in Persia, where she was born, and was buried among the royal sepulchres. This tomb in far away Persia is pointed out as the resting place of her ashes.

MAP—Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, as has been seen (586 B. C.), and the people were taken to Babylon. They were distributed to all parts of Babylonia where colonization and labor were needed. In



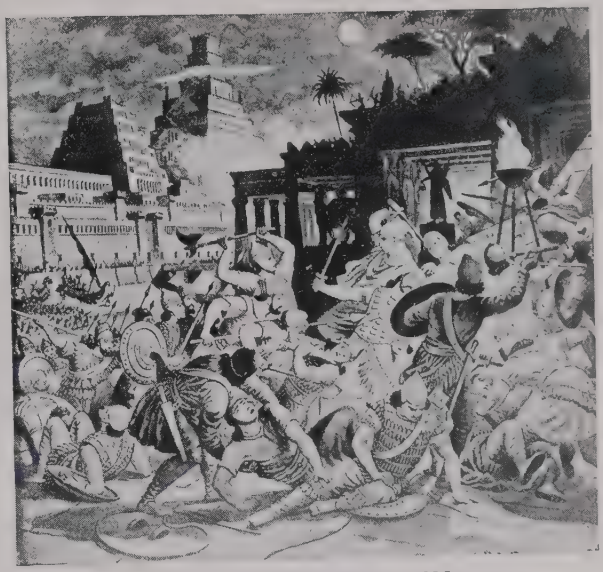
MAP

West

THE VISION INTERPRETED

the meantime, Nebuchadnezzar died and Belshazzar (or perhaps his father), became the ruler (538 B. C.).

THE VISION INTERPRETED—The book of Daniel states that Belshazzar was making a great banquet for a thousand of his lords in the splendid royal palace; and when the golden vessels taken from the Temple were brought into service during their drunken debauch, his doom was written in blazen letters on the walls of the banquet hall. The writing was interpreted by Daniel to mean that the king's doom was sealed.



CYRUS TAKES BABYLON

CYRUS TAKES BABYLON—The fulfillment was at hand. The rulers were very unpopular with the people, and when Cyrus, the same night of the banquet, surrounded the city, the guards threw open the one hundred great gates of brass, and Cyrus at the head of his Medo-Persian army marched in triumph into Babylon and took it, and Belshazzar was put to the sword.

CYRUS—TABLET RECENTLY FOUND—Cyrus was a much different man than the Babylonian king. He was

CYRUS—TABLET RECENTLY FOUND

a much wiser monarch. "Experience had taught him the danger of allowing a disaffected population to exist in a country which might be invaded by an enemy." The first act of Cyrus therefore was to offer freedom to the Jews, permitting them to return to Jerusalem, and even subscribing to the fund to restore the temple. So highly was he esteemed that the Jews looked upon him as their "Great Deliverer." Ezra 1: 1-3.

TOMB OF CYRUS—The tomb of Cyrus still stands in a country now desolate, but it is in the path of

TOMB OF CYRUS

many pilgrims, and is venerated to this day.

MODERN JEW

MODERN JEW—Many Jews had lucrative positions and much goods even in Babylonian days, and would not return to their native land. To these Cyrus recommended that they give substantial help to those who were returning. They were not slow to comply with his suggestion and the fifty thousand who returned were laden with gifts. Ezra 1: 4.

GREAT CONTRIBUTIONS

GREAT CONTRIBUTIONS—Their first thought was to rebuild the temple, and this struck deeply at the heart of many of the more prosperous Jews, who freely made great contributions of "gold, silver, and precious goods to this good work." Ezra 1: 5-6.

CYRUS RESTORES VESSELS—But the

RETURN OF THE JEWS

great and joyous surprise came, when just before they started, Cyrus announced that he was making an additional contribution of the vessels of gold and silver and brass, properties of great value which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple. Ezra 1: 7-11.

RETURN OF THE JEWS—Tears of joy were shed upon the morning the start was made. Many of the elders were still living and no doubt were among the most enthusiastic. It can easily be imagined that the prophet Haggai pronounced the blessing upon them as they, and he with them, departed for the Holy City, the place where his heart had been for so many years.

YOUNGER JEWS

YOUNGER JEWS — The younger generation had heard glowing descriptions

CYRUS RESTORES VESSELS

DISAPPOINTED

of the temple and the Holy City, and no doubt visualized the city as one even more splendid than Babylon itself. Perhaps it did not occur to them that all that was left of it was a mere heap of ruins.

En Route to the Holy City—There were fifty thousand in this first expedition. The journey was long (some twelve or fifteen hundred miles) and the mode of transportation made the trip a wearisome one. No deaths are reported, but it is certain that many of the old saints who started on the trip never realized their dream of seeing the city of David again.

EN ROUTE TO THE HOLY CITY

Disappointed—Seven long months were consumed in making the trip. But when the footsore multitude finally arrived at Jerusalem they found that its glory had departed. Only the gloomy ruins of the temple walls were standing, the old city walls were leveled to the ground, and the grand palace, where once there had been merriment, now was the habitation of owls and bats. It was indeed a desolate sight. Not a soul lived in the city which once teemed with a happy and prosperous people.

Jerusalem in Ruins—There is no doubt that they suffered poignant disappointment at what they saw

JERUSALEM IN RUINS

and there was great mourning. It will be remembered that after Nebuchadnezzar took the people out of Jerusalem a full month intervened before his men returned and destroyed the city, so that the captives did not know just the extent of the ruin of their Holy City.

EXHORTATION OF COURAGE—But there were some great and courageous men among them, who encouraged their broth-

EXHORTATION OF COURAGE

ers by their exhortation and example, and soon they adjusted themselves to the situation.

THE ALTAR RESTORED

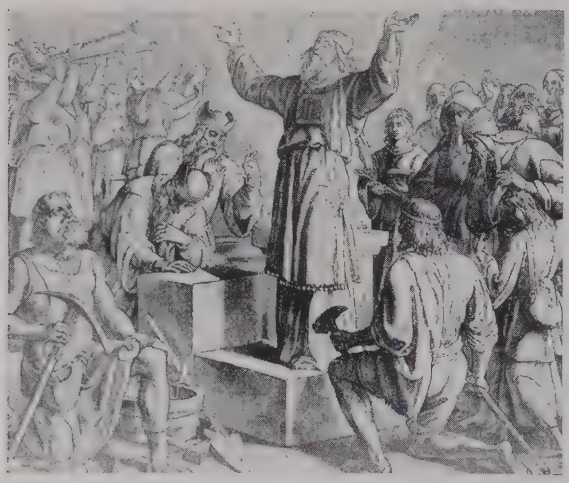
THE ALTAR RESTORED — The very first act was to restore the altar, which had been thrown from its foundation. They started a fire on it and offered burnt offerings, and the fire probably never went out for it was "a continual burnt offering." Ezra 3: 1-6.

LAYING THE PLANS—Cyrus seemed to have made arrangements with the Phœnicians, who had assisted Solomon in the original temple, to help at this time; and with funds they had brought from Babylon, they were able to begin the work of restoration at once.

LAYING THE PLANS

THEY SANG TOGETHER—The beginning was a joyous and prayerful occasion. "They set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites with cymbals to praise the Lord after the ordinance of David, king of Israel. And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord." Ezra 3: 9-11.

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE—But many of the aged who had seen the original temple, when the debris was cleared away and the old foundation was seen, "wept aloud and the noise was heard afar off." (Ezra 3: 12-13.) Zerubbabel was in charge of the work and, it is believed, had been appointed governor by Cyrus. He was of the house of David and probably heir to the throne, but if so he laid no claim to it. He succeeded in getting the work in full swing and from all appearances the temple would soon be restored.



THEY SANG TOGETHER

HINDERING THE WORK—The work on the new temple had barely gotten started when the "people of the land" (presumably the Samaritans) pretended to offer their services. But when Zerubbabel refused their proffer they stirred up trouble by making discouraging

Dore

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE

remarks, and finally misrepresented the Jews in a meddlesome letter to the king of Persia. The letter had some effect, for the work was abandoned for a time and the indications were that the temple might never be completed.

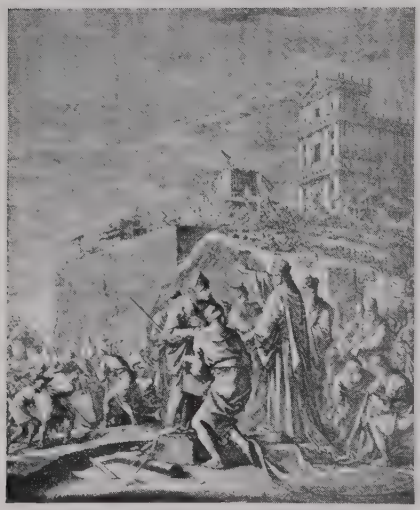
HINDERING THE WORK

Work Proceeds—Darius now becomes king of Persia (521 B. C.). The prophets Haggai and Zechariah, recognizing that he sustained a friendly attitude toward the Jews, took occasion to urge Zerubbabel to proceed with the work on the new temple. Since, however, they must have the consent of Persia to build, Tattenai, the agent of the king, questioned their authority to do so. But when Darius had consulted the

WORK PROCEEDS

records of Cyrus, he not only permitted them to go on with the building but did much to encourage them. Ezra 5; 6: 1-14.

ZERUBBABEL'S TEMPLE—Zerubabbel's temple was finished in the sixth year of the reign of Darius (516 B. C.). Of course it was a great triumph, but to those who had seen the glory of Solomon's temple, this one was a great disappointment.



ZERUBBABEL'S TEMPLE

THE DEDICATION—One month after the temple was finished, the dedication ceremonies began. The older men who deprecated the insignificance of this temple as compared with Solomon's, finally entered the celebration, and it proved to be a great occasion. The fact that they were again on consecrated soil and were free, soon overcame their pride and "The children of the captivity kept the dedication of the house of God with great joy." Ezra 6: 15-18.

RETURN OF EZRA—Zerubbabel was the last of the Davidic family to rule Judah. Thereafter Persian governors were appointed by the king. Sixty years pass with practically no record left to us. Artaxerxes Longimanus, a very wise monarch, ascended the throne of Persia and championed the Jewish cause. He sent Ezra, a very learned priest and scribe, on a

Van Dargent

THE DEDICATION

Dore

EZRA'S PRAYER

pilgrimage to Jerusalem with another large body of Jews. Ezra was armed with absolute authority to conduct affairs as his wisdom dictated and another enthusiastic start was made.

EZRA'S PRAYER—Ezra began a reform at once. The thing that affected the great leader most was that Judah had inter-married with the Samaritans and other non-Jewish peoples. When he realized that this had been done in a wholesale manner "he pulled the hair from his head" and "tore his clothes" and "fell upon his knees and spread out his hands before the Lord." A long and fervent prayer was offered by Ezra and he arose with a decision upon the course he would pursue. Ezra 9.

RETURN OF EZRA

SEPARATE YOURSELVES—"And Ezra the priest stood up and said unto them, ye have transgressed and have taken strange wives to increase the trespass of Israel. Now, therefore, make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers and do his pleasure. Separate yourselves from the people of the land and from the strange wives.

SEPARATE YOURSELVES

Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice; as thou hast said so must we do."

NEHEMIAH THE CUPBEARER — Thirteen years have now passed since Ezra left Persia. Artaxerxes is still living and Nehemiah is his cupbearer. The king is touched by the sad countenance of his servant, and upon being informed that he was sad because of the dilapidated condition of Jerusalem, the king granted him permission to join Ezra in rebuilding the walls. Neh. 1 and 2.

NEHEMIAH THE CUPBEARER

ARTAXERXES' PROCLAMATION — Artaxerxes then proclaimed again

Dore

ARTAXERXES' PROCLAMATION

to the Jewish population that they might return to the city of their fathers and assist in the great work. Nehemiah carried letters of authority and every encouragement possible was given by the king. Neh. 2:1-9.

NEHEMIAH VISITS RUINED CITY

NEHEMIAH VISITS RUINED CITY—So Nehemiah came to Jerusalem and for three days contemplated conditions, but said nothing to anyone in regard to his mission among them. After three days he made a circuit of the city with his Persian guard, alone, making a survey of the work that must be done. This was done by night

LET US BUILD

THE DUNG GATE

unknown to anyone save the few men who were with him. Neh. 2: 12-16.

Let Us Build—Then on another night he, with elders and leaders of Jerusalem, went out among the ruins of the once glorious city. And "he said unto them, ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth in waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: Come and let us build up the walls of Jerusalem that we may be no more a reproach." "And they said, let us arise and build." Neh. 2: 17-18.

The Dung Gate—The gates of the Holy City were first repaired and one of them still standing is the Dung Gate. Then they began to build those portions of the walls that were torn entirely away, and from there to the breaches that had been made by Nebuchadnezzar at the time he captured the city. Neh. 3 (verse 14).

JERUSALEM RESTORED

RESTORATION

EZRA READS THE LAW

Jerusalem Restored—It was not long before the jealous neighbors outside Judah began to interfere with the work again, and the opposition became so severe that while half the force worked the other half watched and were armed for battle at a moment's notice. So Jerusalem again became a walled city, and the fire burned once more on the altar before the House of God. Neh. 34: 5-6.

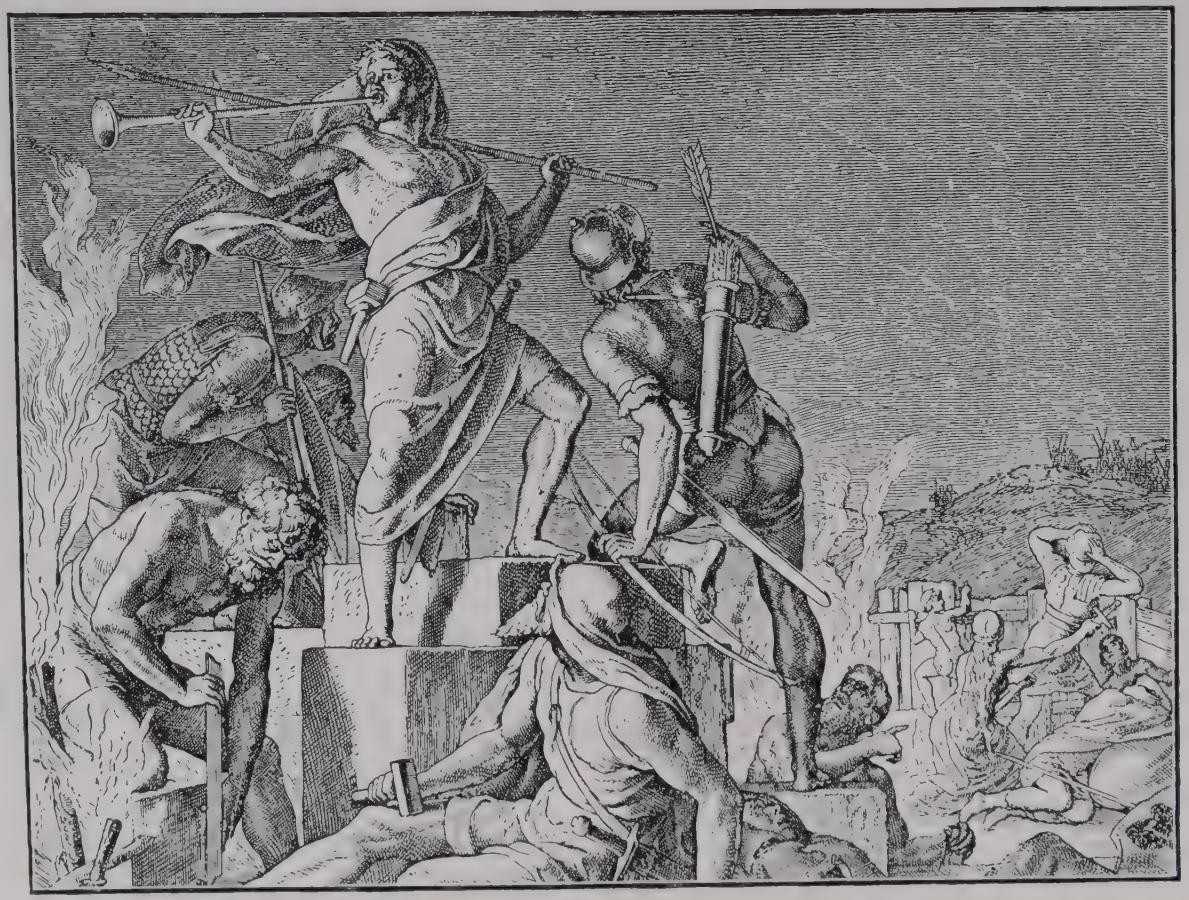
Restoration—Even after the walls were finished the gates were kept closed until late in the morning each day. The inhabitants inside the walls were few at first but inducements were offered that soon filled the city, and religious activities were restored as in former days, except that they were less spectacular. Neh. 7.

Ezra Reads the Law—While Nehemiah was building the walls, Ezra was building character among the people. It was fitting that Ezra, after an absence of some time, should have resumed his service among the people with the reading of the Law of Moses. The occasion was the "Feast of Trumpets." As the law was being read the great throng shouted "Amen! Amen!" "and they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground." After many days the people dispersed and a new era began in Judah. Neh. 8. B. C. 455.

Questions

Name the capital of Persia? How far and what direction from Babylon? What king took Babylon? Who was Xerxes? How did he once entertain his princes? What demand did he make of his wife? What did she reply? What then happened to Vashti,

his wife? How did Xerxes get another wife? What Jewess was applicant? Who was selected by the king? Name Esther's uncle? Of what important thing did he inform the king? Who was Mordecai's enemy? What undue advantage did Haman take? Would the plan have exterminated the Jews? What did Esther do to expose Haman? How did the king honor Mordecai? Who built a scaffold to hang Mordecai? Who led the horse in the parade? What was done at the dinner given by Esther? How did Xerxes receive the news? Who was hanged on Haman's scaffold? Who else was hanged on it? Who settled the score with Haman's associates? What was the first act of Cyrus? Did all Jews return to Jerusalem? How many? What did the Babylonian Jews do for those returning? What did Cyrus give them? How long had they been in Babylon? How long did it take to make the trip? What was their feeling upon arrival? Had they known of the extent of the ruin? What did they restore first? How did Cyrus help the rebuilding? Who rebuilt the temple? What handicap did they meet? How long was the temple in rebuilding? What prolonged the war? What noted scribe came later? What was the nature of his work? Who was Nehemiah? To whom was he cupbearer? For what purpose did he return? What did he accomplish? What was the difference in the nature of the work of Nehemiah and Ezra? What was the last recorded act in the Old Testament? Did they all agree to keep the Law?



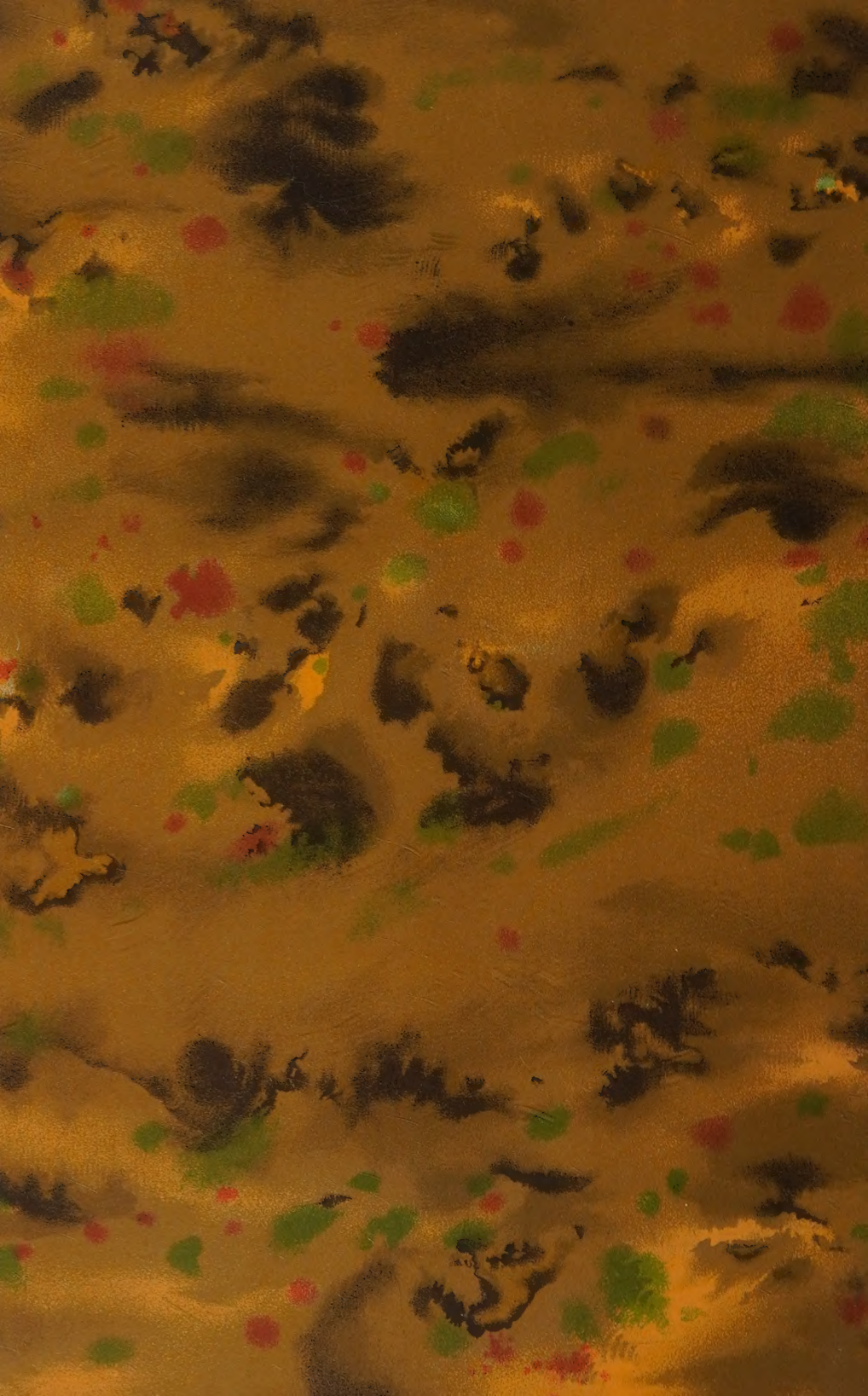
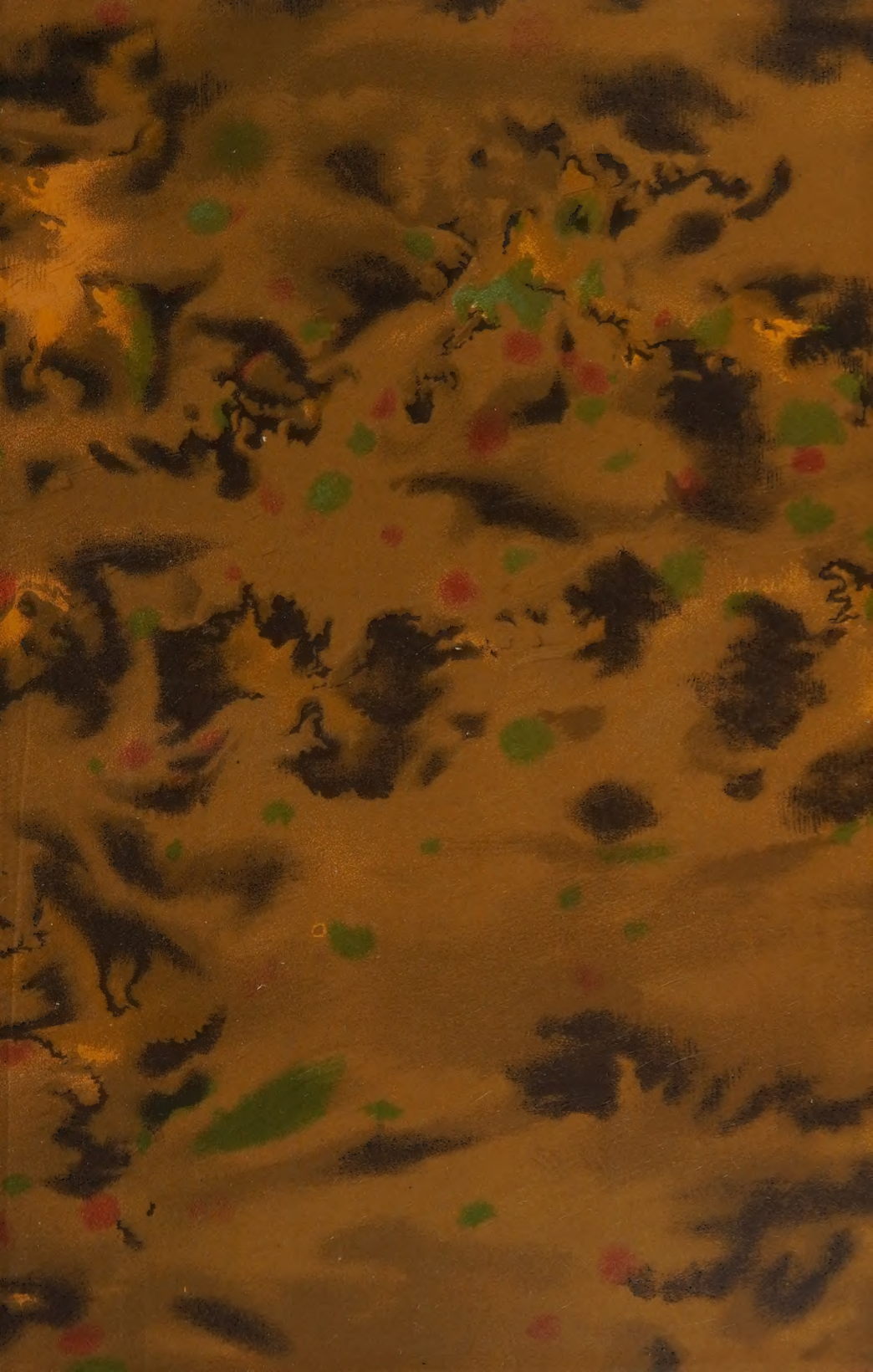
SO WE LABORED IN THE WORK

G. W. Wade, D.D., in his splendid volume, "Old Testament History," offers the following table, which gives the duration of the reigns of the Israelite and Judæan monarchs, and the synchronism between them as stated in *Kings*. In general, the last year of a reign is likewise reckoned as the first of the succeeding reign, but in some cases the principle seems to have been departed from.

ISRAEL.				JUDAH.		
	Name.	*Year of Reign.*	*Length of Reign.*	*Name.*	*Year of Reign.*	*Length of Reign.*
975	Jeroboam I.	1	..	Rehoboam	1	
				"		17
	"	18	..	Abijah	1	
	"	20		"		3
			..	Asa	1	
			22 ..	"	2	
954	Nadab	1				
	"		2 ..	"	3	
953	Baasha	1				
	"		24 ..	"	26	
930	Elah	1				
	"		2			
929	Zimri		7 days ..	Asa	27	
929	Omri	1	..	"	27	
	"		12 ..	"	38	
918	Ahab	1				
	"	4		"		41
	"		22 ..	Jehoshaphat	1	
894	Ahaziah	1	..	"	17	
	"		2			
893	Jehoram	1	..	"	18	
				"		25
	"	5	..	Jehoram	1	
				"		8
	"		12 ..	Ahaziah		1
884	Jehu	1	..	Athaliah	1	
				"		6
	"	7	..	Jehoash (Joash)	1	
	"		28 ..	"	23	
856	Jehoahaz	1				

ISRAEL.				JUDAH.			
	Name.	*Year of Reign.*	*Length of Reign.*	*Name.*		*Year of Reign.*	*Length of Reign.*
856	Jehoahaz		17				
840	Joash	1		"		37	
	"	2		"			40
	"		16	Amaziah		1	
825	Jeroboam II.	1		"		15	
	"	27		"	"		29
	"		41	Uzziah (Azariah)		1	
773	Zechariah		6 mo.	"	"	38	
772	Shallum		1 mo.				
772	Menahem	1		"	"	39	
	"		10				
761	Pekahiah	1		"	"	50	
	"		2				
759	Pekah	1		"	"	52	
				"	"		52
	"	2		Jotham		1	
				"			16
	"	17		Ahaz		1	
	"		20				
730	Hoshea	1		"		12	
				"			16
	"	3		Hezekiah		1	
722	" (Samaria taken)		9	"		6	

JUDAH.

Hezekiah	29
Manasseh	55
Amon	2
Josiah	31
Jehoahaz	3 months
Jehoiakim	11
Jehoiachin	3 months
Zedekiah	11

NOTE.—Jerusalem was taken 586 B.C. When you add the length of the reign of the several Judean kings, from Hezekiah to Zedekiah, there is a small discrepancy which has never been satisfactorily accounted for. But this is of little consequence